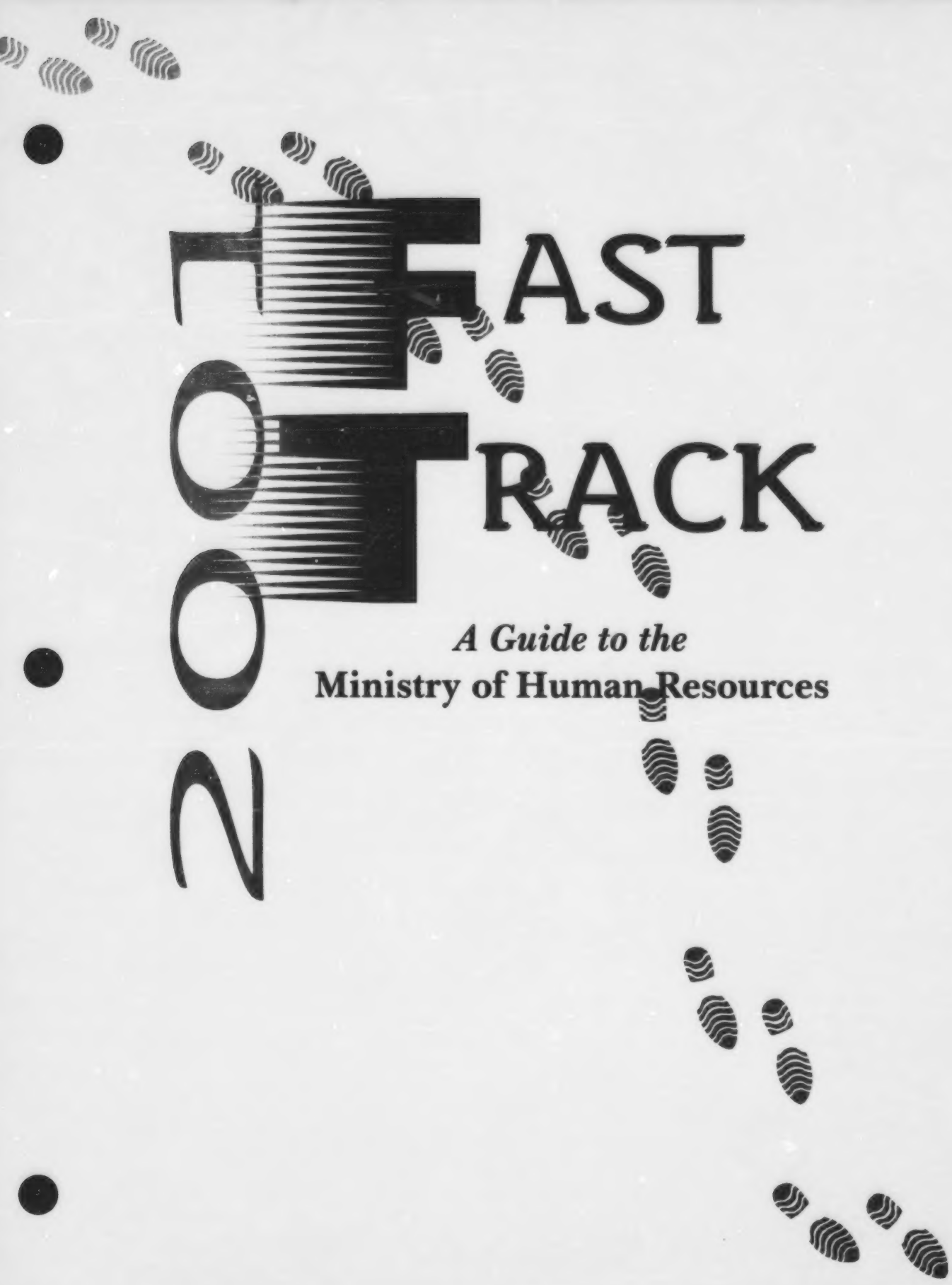

A Guide to the
Ministry of Human Resources

Ordering Information

The most current version of Fast Track is available on the MHR Web site at: **www.mhr.gov.bc.ca/publicat/fasttrak/toc.htm**
Watch this site for updates of Fast Track.

Disclaimer

Fast Track contains general information only and is intended as a guide to BC Benefits and other programs. When questions arise, the BC Benefits Acts and Regulations apply.

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Introduction to the Ministry of Human Resources

The Ministry of Human Resources (MHR) provides a range of services and programs to help individuals and families get ahead in life and build better futures for their children.

Among other programs and services, MHR is responsible for the following:

BC Benefits: BC Benefits is a comprehensive program of income support and other benefits that links people with opportunities for success.

Employment Services: MHR provides services to assist people to become economically independent by helping them develop job skills and find and maintain employment.

Office for Disability Issues: ODI ensures that the interests of the disability community are voiced when policies, programs or legislation are being prepared that will have an impact on persons with disabilities and their families.

Child Care Subsidy: MHR administers subsidies to help low– and moderate–income families meet their child care needs.

Emergency Social Services: Emergency Social Services (ESS) provides short–term assistance to British Columbians who are forced to leave their homes because of fire, floods, earthquakes or other emergencies. This assistance includes shelter, food, clothing, emotional support and reuniting families.

Privacy

The *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* states that personal information gathered by the government must be held in confidence and used only for the purpose for which it was collected. Personal information can only be released if the individuals concerned give their consent in writing, or when they choose to involve their MLAs to assist in resolving a problem.

. . . personal information gathered by the government must be held in confidence and used only for the purpose for which it was collected.

The privacy of information gathered from people participating in Ministry of Human Resources programs is fundamental to the policy and practices of MHR. The ministry deals with sensitive personal issues and all information provided by individuals and families to the ministry must be used only for the agreed purposes.

Ministry workers are well versed in the principles and laws that protect the privacy of clients. These same legal provisions also apply to other public workers including MLAs' constituency office staff.

Failure to protect the privacy of people participating in government programs may result in legal action, including lawsuits.

For answers to questions about how to handle confidential information, contact the manager of MHR Information and Privacy Office at 250 387–3128.

Verifying Information

When applicants and clients request assistance under BC Benefits, they sign a declaration that the information they have provided is true. The ministry has the authority to verify initial and continuing eligibility with a variety of public and private sources, including provincial, federal and other agencies as well as with individuals (i.e., landlords, employers). The person receiving BC Benefits agrees that the ministry may compare the information he or she has provided to the ministry with other agencies, such as Employment Insurance, Canada Pension Plan, Canada Custom and Revenue Agency, ICBC, and the Workers' Compensation Board, and that such agencies can release personal information needed to determine eligibility for assistance.

Sharing Information

No information gathered under provincial government legislation can be shared unless a consent form has been signed by the individual or by the individual's parent or guardian if the individual is under the age of 19. Exceptions to this rule occur when information is released in court proceedings involving prosecutions for contravention of the acts or regulations (i.e., welfare fraud, family maintenance disputes).

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

The *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* governs the release of personal and general information and assures the protection of privacy for the citizens of British Columbia.

Section 33 of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* permits a public body (in this case, the ministry) to disclose personal information only in limited and specific circumstances. If the circumstance is not expressly stated in Section 33, the ministry **must not** disclose personal information.

Rules for MLAs

One such circumstance is described in Section 33 (k) of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. This section permits the public body to disclose personal information about an individual to a member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) who has been asked by that individual for help in resolving a problem.

An MLA is elected to represent his or her constituents in the province, and when a constituent seeks help in resolving a problem, a written consent form is not required. Even so, disclosure is allowed only to help the person concerned address a mistake or understanding, or resolve a problem with the ministry.

A simple inquiry into the regular progress of an application for a service or benefit does not warrant disclosure. Where there is no problem to resolve, the person concerned must provide written authorization for the MLA to receive personal information. The same information can also be provided directly to the person concerned.

The MLA can designate constituency assistants to act on his or her behalf. A list of designated staff should be provided to the ministry by the MLA.

While the written consent of the person concerned is not normally required for disclosure to MLAs under Section 33 (k), the inquiry should be recorded **in writing** by the MLA. This disclosure of personal information, including verbal exchanges, will be noted on the person's MHR file.

In cases where the information is particularly sensitive (e.g., medical or criminal information), the ministry may require the consent of the person involved. The ministry will not disclose to an MLA, either verbally or in writing, any information that would not be disclosed to the person concerned.

At times, people choose to involve an MLA by copying a letter to an MLA, or asking the MLA to forward the letter to the ministry. It is general practice then, for the ministry to forward copies of the response to both the person and the MLA.

BC Benefits

Introduction

BC Benefits is a comprehensive program of income support and other benefits that links people with opportunities for success.

BC Benefits programs are income– and asset–tested. Applicants are expected to take advantage of all other sources of income and assets before qualifying. People participating in the Income Assistance and Youth Works program under BC Benefits (with some exceptions) must either be actively searching for employment or taking part in an approved job or training program to receive benefits.

The BC Benefits Legislation

The BC Benefits acts and regulations fall under the mandate of the Ministry of Human Resources (MHR). They include the following:

- ***The BC Benefits (Income Assistance) Act and Regulation*** serves people age 25 to 64 through MHR Employment and Benefits Centres. MHR administers this legislation for people who are employable or temporarily excused from looking for employment. In addition, the legislation also serves adults age 65 and older who do not receive a federal pension, children under 19 who are living away from home, and children living in the home of a relative.

- ***The Disability Benefits Program Act and Regulation*** serves people age 18 and up who have the full Disability Benefits designation. This is administered through MHR Employment and Benefits Centres, and the ministry's Health Services Branch.

- ***The BC Benefits (Youth Works) Act and Regulation*** serves youth age 19 to 24 through MHR Employment and Benefits Centres.

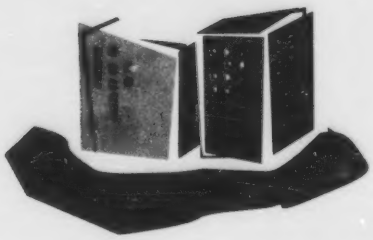
- ***The BC Benefits (Appeals) Act and Regulation*** governs all appeal processes for the BC Benefits program. The BC Benefits Appeal Board is mandated through this act and is an independent body reporting to the Minister of Human Resources.

Program Delivery

There are nine Ministry of Human Resources BC Benefits regions throughout the province, each headed by a regional executive officer who supervises the activities of the regional office and Employment and Benefits Centres.

The regional executive officer (REO) is the senior ministry representative in the region. Responsible for the overall accountability and successful delivery of the BC Benefits program, the REO provides leadership an direction in the management of staff, contracted resources, financial and physical resources and in the resolution of operational/ regional problems.

Each region has a BC Benefits coordinator who reports to the REO. The BC Benefits coordinator (BCBC) is responsible for the regional implementation of BC Benefits, and handles re–considerations and appeals of individual cases. He or she also works with ministry staff, key stakeholders and community representatives to resolve program issues at the regional level.



BC Benefits clients are served through 138 Employment and Benefits Centres located across the province. Many Employment and Benefits Centres provide specialized programs and services. For example, all youth may be dealt with at one Employment and Benefits Centre in the region, while single parents and people with disabilities may be referred to others. In less populated areas, a single office may still deal with all groups.

The district supervisor is the person who supervises a Employment and Benefits Centre. He or she is responsible for seeing that everyone participating in a BC Benefits program is treated fairly and according to the BC Benefits acts, regulations and policies.

Applying for BC Benefits

Under BC Benefits, the Ministry of Human Resources provides financial assistance and opportunities for people in need. If the person is:

- out of work or earning very little;
- awaiting other income;
- unable to work; or,
- working and in need of child care;

he or she may be able to receive income support, shelter, a child care subsidy and be referred to job and training opportunities. Eligibility and monthly assistance rates depend on income and asset levels, and the family situation.

Under BC Benefits, MHR provides financial assistance and opportunities for people in need.

If the person can work, he or she is required to look for a job or take training as a condition for receiving assistance. BC Benefits makes sure that our limited resources go to those people who need it most.

Hardship assistance may be issued in some situations when an individual is not eligible for BC Benefits. For example, refugee claimants who arrive in B.C. may receive hardship assistance from the province until their claim for refugee status is determined.

How to apply

Local MHR Employment and Benefits Centres are listed in the blue pages of the telephone book, under the provincial government listing. Some regions have specialized offices that serve single parents, youth or job–seeking adults. For a complete listing of all Employment and Benefits Centres, *see* MHR Directory starting on p. 85 of this guide or check the ministry's Web site at **www.mhr.gov.bc.ca**

Orientation Session

All applicants for BC Benefits must attend an orientation session as part of the application procedure. There are a few exceptions to this requirement, including applicants who:

- have a physical or mental condition that prevents them from attending;
- apply for the Child in the Home of a Relative benefit; or,
- are 65 or more years of age.

The session will provide details about the necessary documents, income and assets levels, eligibility rules and work expectations when applying for BC Benefits.

In the office, the applicant will be asked to fill out an Appointment and Enquiry form. The form asks for information such as name, address, family situation and whether or not the applicant is able and willing to work. An appointment date and time will be made with a financial assistance worker (FAW).

Meeting with the FAW

During the appointment, the FAW will guide the applicant through the application process to determine eligibility for assistance. The text of the application form is available in English, French, Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, Punjabi, Tagalog (Phillipino), Russian, and Czech. Applicants can ask their FAW for a translation.

The applicant will be asked about assets and other income that may be available. (*See* **Income and Assets** on the following page). The applicant is expected to accept or pursue all other sources of income before receiving provincial income

support. The ministry can then "top up" that income if it is less than the maximum rates under BC Benefits.

The FAW can verify the information provided with federal, provincial and public agencies, as well as individuals (ie, landlords, employers). Staff will conform to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act,* and ensure that only personal information relevant to initial and ongoing eligibility is collected and verified.

Income and Assets

Eligibility for BC Benefits is based largely on the applicant's monthly income and total assets. The ministry is considered the payer of last resort. This means that people must first access all other forms of income and available assets before receiving BC Benefits.

Other Income

During the eligibility interview, the worker will review the applicant's circumstances. He or she may be entitled to other income such as:

- family maintenance payments;
- Workers' Compensation Board payments;
- pensions; or,
- Employment Insurance benefits.

The worker will help the applicant access these avenues of income and then assess the need for BC Benefits.

All or a portion of some types of income are exempted when the worker calculates an applicant's monthly income.

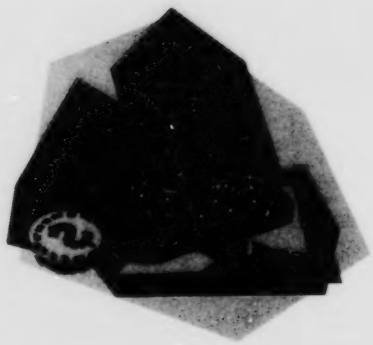
For example:

- Families with dependent children may receive a total exemption of $100 per month on any combination of CPP Orphan's Benefits and Family Maintenance payments;

- Disbursements from a discretionary or non–discretionary trust for a recipient who is receiving disability benefits or is in a special care facility are exempt if used to cover medically–related costs. Disbursements up to a maximum of $5,484 annually are also exempt if used to promote the independence of the recipient.

The BC Benefits Policy and Procedures Manual at **www.mhr.gov.bc.ca/publicat/Vol1/index.htm** has a complete list of which types of income are exempt.

Assets



Applicants and clients are required to take advantage of assets when the value of those assets exceeds specified levels. Under BC Benefits legislation, clients are entitled to retain a primary residence (that is, a residence which they own and live in) and a vehicle. They must make use of, or prove they are attempting to make use of other assets such as RRSPs, savings, rental properties, and other vehicles before assistance can be issued.

A financial assistance worker can help determine if an asset can be converted or not.

Assets include:

- cash;
- equity in property, stocks, bonds, certificates or other possessions that could be converted to cash;
- beneficial interest in real or personal property held in trust.

Examples of assets that are considered exempt include:

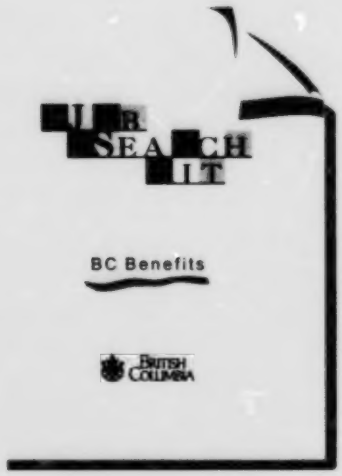
- farm assets;
- locked–in pensions;
- non–discretionary trusts up to a lifetime maximum of $100,000 for disability benefits client and special care facility residents.

A word about fraud

The application form gives a snapshot of the applicant's income, assets, family situation and expenses. It is a legal document. Ministry staff must confirm the information given. A deliberately false statement on this form, or on the monthly request for continued assistance form (cheque stub), is fraud and may lead to prosecution for fraud. Applicants are urged to review the application form before signing it to ensure that all the information is correct. Many offices now have verification officers who can examine the information more closely.

Service screening

If the applicant is eligible for income support, the FAW will conduct a "service screening" of the applicant to quickly measure his or her current state of job readiness. Based on the results of the service screening, the client can then be referred to appropriate programs and services in a timely manner.



Applicants who are classified as "independent," or job ready, will be provided with a job search kit and labour market information, and may be referred to one or more of a range of Work Connections services to help improve the effectiveness of their job search. Some clients who are ready to work will be placed in jobs through the Jobs Partnership program. (*See* Employment Services p. 67 for more information about Work Connections services and the Jobs Partnership program.)

Applicants who are classified as "assisted," or in need of help in overcoming barriers to employment, will be referred to one or more of a range of job and training programs and services aimed at addressing their specific skills needs. (*See* Employment Services p. 67 for more information about job and training programs and services.)

Cheque issue

Funds are issued monthly, usually the last Wednesday of the month. BC Benefits clients can have the funds transferred electronically to their banking accounts or receive their cheques by mail. Many still choose to pick up their cheques at their local Employment and Benefits Centre.

Q&A

Where should an individual or family in need go to find help?

The best place for an individual or a family in need to go for help is to their local MHR Employment and Benefits Centre. Financial assistance workers (FAWs) work out of the 138 Employment and Benefits Centres across the province, and are knowledgeable about their local communities. They apply the terms of the BC Benefits legislation and help people move from welfare to work or achieve the greatest degree of independence of which they are capable. FAWs often work closely with community workers and advocates.

If an individual has inquiries of a general nature, he or she can stop at a Employment and Benefits Centre to have a look at the brochure and publication rack or speak with staff. Information is also available on the Ministry of Human Resources Internet site at **www.mhr.gov.bc.ca**

If the person is already receiving BC Benefits and requires information that is specific to his or her situation, then the best place to start is with the Employment and Benefits Centre and the FAW.

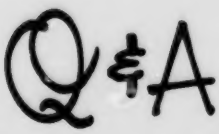
If the person has an inquiry that concerns family maintenance issues, then the family maintenance worker (FMW) is the best resource.

What happens if someone is dissatisfied with ministry service or decisions?

Everyone who deals with the ministry has the right to be treated fairly and with respect. If a person believes he or she has been treated unfairly or a wrong decision has been made, a complaint can be laid with the ministry. If the complaint is about an administrative or non–legislative issue, (i.e., the method of cheque pick–up, request for a different worker), this can best be resolved at the local level. The best route is for the person with the complaint to talk to the district supervisor.

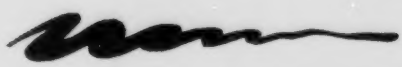
If the complaint has to do with the denial, reduction or discontinuation of benefits, he or she can begin the reconsideration/appeal process with the district supervisor. The entire appeal process is described in detail starting on page 57.

It is important to the ministry that all complaints be handled fairly, consistently and within the prescribed deadlines. The appeal process has been streamlined to ensure that all decisions are timely and understood by all the parties involved.



What if a person feels the level of income support being offered is insufficient to meet his or her needs?

Income support rates are not determined on an ad hoc basis or by a case–by–case approach. Rather, they are set by legislation, and depend on the applicant's income and asset levels, as well as his or her family situation.



Income support rates are set by legislation and depend on the applicant's income asset levels and family situation.

If a person receiving BC Benefits feels the support is insufficient, he or she should speak to staff in the Employment and Benefits Centre. The person may be eligible for other benefits such as a crisis benefit. Eligibility for a crisis benefit depends on:

- whether the need is a budget expense that could have been planned for;
- if there is imminent danger to physical health; or,
- if there is a protection issue for a child.

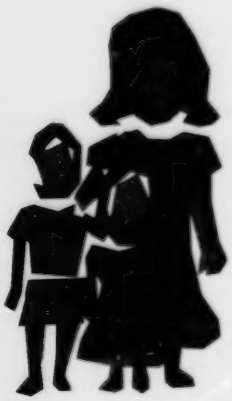
What if an individual has trouble accessing ministry programs due to language barriers?

An individual who has difficulty speaking English should ask a friend or family member to consult the local Employment and Benefits Centre. The ministry may be able to provide translation services, or direct the individual to the appropriate community resources. In some communities, intercultural associations may be able to provide translations. Often, the best results occur when the person is accompanied by a friend or family member who can interpret.

Income Assistance

The Income Assistance (IA) program provides essential income support, employment and training support, and other benefits to a wide range of people who need temporary assistance and meet eligibility requirements under the *BC Benefits (Income Assistance) Act*. The program is strictly limited to those in need. Eligibility is determined by stringent income and asset testing.

Adults age 25–64



The Income Assistance program refers employable adults age 25 to 64 to a range of job search, training and work experience programs to help them make the transition from welfare to work. Financial assistance is provided to eligible adults and their dependants until they are able to find a job that pays more than the maximum assistance to which they are entitled.

Most IA recipients between 25 and 59 years of age are required to actively search for employment or take part in job and training programs in order to receive income assistance. Single parents with dependent children under the age of seven and adults between 60 and 64 are not required to participate in training and job search programs. Persons who are unable to work for a short period may be temporarily excused from this requirement.

Q&A

What programs are available to help people make the move from welfare to work?

IA clients may be referred to one or more of a range of job and training programs and services to help them overcome barriers to getting a job and keeping it. Available programs and services may include the following:

- job search, career planning and job placement services;
- job clubs, entrepreneurial exploration;
- employability skills programs; and
- workplace–based training and self–employment.

(*See* Employment Services p. 67 for more information about job and training programs.)

Because resources are limited, some waiting lists exist. Adults may be required to wait for program spaces to open up.

The range of programs delivered in each community across the province depends upon local job market conditions, the availability of services and the needs of people in that community.

Q&A

What about those who are temporarily unable to work?

Employable adults may be temporarily excused from taking part in job and training activities under certain circumstances. The following categories of clients do not have to search for employment or participate in job or training programs:

- single parents with at least one child under seven years of age, or with a child who has a physical or mental condition preventing the parent from leaving home for employment;
- persons in a special care facility or private hospital;
- persons in hospital for extended care;
- persons with a drug or alcohol problem, a mental health condition, or a temporary medical condition that interferes with their ability to search for employment, continue in employment or participate in job or training program;
- persons in an approved treatment or rehabilitation program; and
- persons separated from an abusive spouse within the past six months.

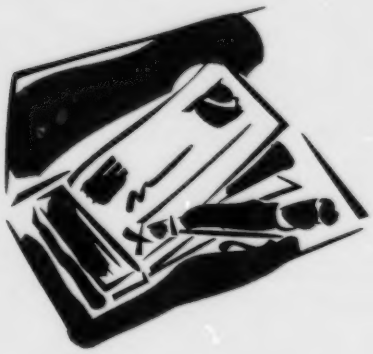
Persons with a Level One Disability

What if the person is unable to work for a longer period?

An adult who is medically unable to work for at least six months may qualify as a person with a level one disability.

To be eligible for this designation, the person must:

- be under 65 years of age;
- have a medical condition that is likely to last for at least six months, according to the certificate of a medical practitioner;
- have ongoing extra costs or need ongoing assistance to perform daily living tasks; and
- have no other sources of funding to pay for those extra costs or assistance.



People in this category receive a higher support rate to cover their extra ongoing costs.

The individual will be required to provide documentation from a medical doctor verifying his or her condition. Information and forms are available from local Employment and Benefits Centres, and a FAW can help fill out the form.

Persons with a level one disability may take part in job and training programs but are not required to do so.

Can IA clients earn money while working and still receive BC Benefits?

As an important step towards self–sufficiency, single IA clients who are working may continue to receive full BC Benefits while earning an additional $100 a month. Couples and families may continue to receive full BC Benefits while earning an additional $200 a month. In addition, 25 per cent of any money the client earns beyond that amount is exempted from benefit rate calculations for a maximum of 12 months in a 36–month period. The exemptions become available after the client has been on assistance for three consecutive months.

Q&A

What about clients who want to start their own businesses?

People who have been receiving BC Benefits for three consecutive months who want to establish their own businesses may participate in the Self–Employment program. This program supports self–employment by providing clients with skills training where necessary and on–going mentoring to maximize their opportunities for success. People who are in a ministry-approved Self–Employment program may accumulate business assets and re–invest business profits without penalty for up to12 months if they are IA or Youth Works clients, and up to 18 months if they are receiving disability benefits.

The Self–Employment program is available province–wide and is funded by regions based on local needs. (*See* Employment Services p. 67 for more information on the Self–Employment program.)

Q&A

What is the Jobs Partnership program pilot?

The Jobs Partnership program (JPP) pilot is designed to help people who have applied for BC Benefits find jobs quickly and keep them. Under this program, which is a partnership between government and the small business and tourism sectors, partner agencies find job placements and provide appropriate pre–employment services to clients. Once the client has been placed in a job, the agency will help the person stay employed by continuing to provide job support and encouragement for up to 19 months. Income assistance, Youth Works and disability benefits applicants and clients are eligible for the program. (*See* Employment Services p. 67 for more information on the Jobs Partnership program.

What if someone wants to return to school? Is there assistance available?

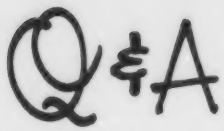
People receiving BC Benefits who are ready for and interested in pursuing full–time post–secondary training can leave welfare and apply for BC Student Financial Assistance. Assistance may include grants, loans that may be forgiven, repayable loans and opportunities to combine work and study. To learn more about what financial assistance is available, the Student Services Branch of the Ministry of Advanced Education, should be contacted at:

BC Student Services Branch
Ministry of Advanced Education
2nd Fl., 1106 Cook Street
P.O. Box 9173 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9H7
Phone: 250 387–6100 (Victoria)
604 660–2610 (Lower Mainland) or
call toll free 1 800 561–1818 (rest of B.C.)

(*See* the BC Student Assistance program on the Ministry of Advanced Education Web site at **www.gov.bc.ca/aett** for additional information.

What about families with dependent children?

MHR recognizes the significant demands of child rearing. Single parents with children under the age of seven are not required to participate in training or job search programs. However, these programs as well as subsidized child care, are available to them if they wish. Single parents must participate when their youngest child reaches the age of seven.



Families with dependent children leaving welfare for a full–time job may be eligible for a variety of transition–to–work benefits, and assistance with child care costs. Information on transition–to–work benefits and the child care subsidy is available at the local Employment and Benefits Centre.

What are the requirements for adults age 60 to 64?

BC Benefits clients age 60–64 are not required to participate in training and job search programs. However, these clients have the option of taking part in job and training programs when they are available.

People in this age category may have applied early for their Canada Pension Plan (CPP) Early Retirement benefits, and as a result, receive reduced CPP payments. As is the case with all eligible BC Benefits clients, they will receive a top–up from the ministry if their CPP payment and other income is less than the amount they would be entitled to under BC Benefits.

Adults age 65+

The Income Assistance legislation provides income support to people age 65 and older who do not receive a federal pension. An income and asset test is used to determine eligibility. Adults age 65+ who are receiving BC Benefits are **NOT** eligible for MHR training programs.

Young People Under Age 19 Living Away from Home

Young people under the age of 19 who have left home may be eligible for income assistance under the *BC Benefits Act* only after reasonable efforts have been made to have the parent/guardian support the child. Referrals are made to Ministry of Children and Family Development social workers if the applicant is under 17 years of age and if there are child protection concerns.

Young people living away from home are eligible for MHR training and job search programs.

High Risk Youth

Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCF) social workers have the option of entering into agreements directly with high–risk youth between the ages of 16 and 19 who cannot return home to live with their families or another capable and willing adult. Youth who are assisted financially through MCF may be eligible for MHR training and job search programs.

Child in the Home of a Relative (CIHR)

The Child in the Home of a Relative program helps a relative provide the basic needs of a child when the parent is unable to provide for the child.

The child must be:

- placed in the relative's home by the parent; and
- under 19 years of age.

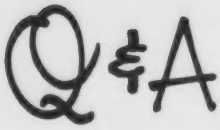
The relative may be a blood relative or relative by marriage.

Parents are expected to contribute toward the cost of caring for the child. The relative may apply for the Canada Child Tax Benefit on behalf of the child.

Youth Works

Youth Works offers opportunities for youth between the age of 19 and 24 to move into the job market by guaranteeing access to job search, job preparation assistance, work experience or training. Eligible youth must be looking for a job or participating in an job or training program in order to receive a living allowance. Welfare is no longer available to this age group.

Youth Works is limited to youth in need who meet stringent income and asset level tests.



What programs are available to help Youth Works clients get jobs?

Youth Works clients may be referred to one or more of a range of job or training programs and services to help them overcome barriers to getting permanent employment. Available programs and services may include the following:

- job search, career planning and job placement services;
- job clubs, entrepreneurial exploration;
- employability skills programs; and,
- workplace–based training and self–employment.

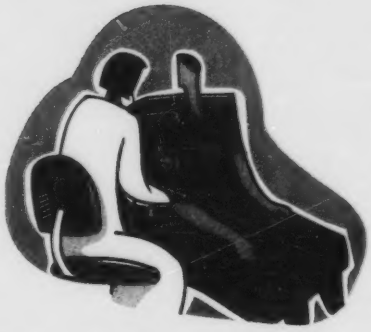
(*See* the Employment Services p. 67 for more information about work–related programs)

Young people may be referred to one or more of a range of employment–related programs and services to help them overcome barriers to getting permanent employment.

Youth referred to an employment–related program under Youth Works have priority over other people for placement in that program.

The range of Youth Works programs delivered in each community across the province depends upon local job market conditions, the availability of services and the needs of Youth Works clients in that community.

Q&A



Persons with a Level One Disability

What about young people who are temporarily unable to work?

Youth Works clients may be temporarily excused from taking part in job or training programs under certain circumstances. The following categories of people do not need to search for work or take part participate in these programs:

- single parents with at least one child under seven years of age or with a child who has a physical or mental condition preventing the parent from leaving home for employment;
- persons in a special care facility or private hospital;
- persons in hospital for extended care;
- persons with a drug or alcohol problem, a mental health condition, or a temporary medical condition that interferes with their ability to search for employment, continue in employment or participate in an employability program;
- persons in an approved treatment or rehabilitation program; and
- persons who have separated from an abusive spouse within the past six months.

What if the young person is unable to work for a longer period?

A youth who is medically unable to work for at least six months may qualify as a person with a level one disability.

To be eligible for this designation, the young person must:

- have a medical condition that is likely to last for at least six months, according to the certificate of a medical practitioner;
- have ongoing extra costs or need ongoing assistance to perform daily living tasks; and
- have no other sources of funding to pay for those extra costs or assistance.

People in this category receive a higher support rate to cover their extra ongoing costs.

The individual will be required to provide documentation from a medical doctor verifying his or her condition. Information and forms are available from local Employment and Benefits Centres, and a FAW can help fill out the form.

Persons with a level one disability may take part in job and training programs but are not required to do so.

Q&A

Can Youth Works clients earn money through working and still receive BC Benefits?

As an important step towards self–sufficiency, single Youth Works clients who are working may continue to receive full BC Benefits while earning an additional $100 a month. Couples and families may continue to receive full BC Benefits while earning an additional $200 a month. In addition, 25 per cent of any money the client earns beyond that amount is exempted from benefit rate calculations for a maximum of 12 months in a 36-month period. The exemptions become available after the client has been on assistance for three consecutive months.

What about Youth Works clients who want to start their own businesses?

Young people who have been receiving BC Benefits for three consecutive months and want to establish their own businesses may participate in the Self–Employment program. This program supports self–employment by providing participants with skills training where necessary and on–going mentoring to maximize their opportunities for success. People who are in a ministry–approved Self–Employment program may accumulate business assets and re–invest business profits without penalty for up to 12 months if they are Income Assistance (IA) or Youth Works clients, and up to 18 months if they are receiving disability benefits.

The Self–Employment program is available province–wide and is funded by regions based on local needs. (*See* Employment Services p. 67 for more information on the Self–Employment program.)

Q&A

Are Youth Works clients eligible for the Jobs Partnership program pilot?

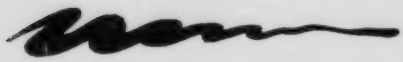
Young people who have applied for or are participating in Youth Works may be eligible for the Jobs Partnership program pilot (JPP). The pilot is designed to help people who have applied for BC Benefits find jobs quickly and keep them. Under this program, which is a partnership between government and the small business and tourism sectors, partner agencies find job placements and provide appropriate pre–employment services to participants. Once the client has been placed in a job, the agency will help the person stay employed by continuing to provide job support and encouragement for up to 19 months. (*See* Employment Services p. 67 for more information on the Jobs Partnership program.)

What if a young person wants to return to school? Is assistance available?

Youth Works clients who are ready for and interested in pursuing post–secondary training can opt out of Youth Works and apply for BC Student Financial Assistance. Assistance may include grants, loans that may be forgiven, repayable loans and opportunities to combine work and study. To learn what financial assistance is available, contact the Student Services Branch of the Ministry of Advanced Education at:

BC Student Services Branch
Ministry of Advanced Education
2nd Fl., 1106 Cook Street
P.O. Box 9173 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, B.C.
V8W 9H7
Phone: 250 387–6100 (Victoria)
604 660–2610 (Lower Mainland)
or call toll free 1 800 561–1818 (rest of B.C.)

(*See* the BC Student Assistance program on the Ministry of Advanced Education Web site at **www.gov.bc.ca/aett** for additional information.



Youth Works clients with children who get jobs may be eligible for a range of transition to work benefits and help with child care costs

What about young people who have dependent children?

Young people with dependent children are eligible for a living allowance through Youth Works provided they meet the asset and income requirements. Single parents in this age group have access to the same programs and training opportunities as other youth, but they are not required to look for work or participate in the job or training programs until their youngest child reaches the age of seven.

Families with dependent children leaving Youth Works for full–time work may be eligible for a variety of transition–to–work benefits and assistance with child care costs. Information on transition–to–work benefits and child care subsidy is available from the local Employment and Benefits Centre.

Disability Benefits

Under the BC Benefits program, MHR provides income support and other benefits to assist persons with disabilities in overcoming barriers to independence.

These benefits allow persons with disabilities to participate more fully in their communities and, in some cases, move into the job market.

MHR helps persons with disabilities participate more fully in their communities and, in some cases, move into the job market.

A person may qualify for the Disability Benefits program if she or he:

- is 18 years of age or older;
- as a direct result of a severe mental or physical impairment:
  - requires extensive assistance or supervision in order to perform daily living tasks within reasonable time, or
  - requires unusual and continuous monthly expenditures for transportation or for special diets or for other unusual but essential and continuous needs, and
  - has confirmation from a medical practitioner that the impairment exists, and is likely to continue for at least two years, or is likely to continue for at least one year and is likely to recur.

Disability benefits are not a pension. The monthly entitlement is income and asset tested. Payment of benefits is based on the individual's ongoing financial eligibility.

Disability Benefits program clients are not required to look for work. However, MHR job search, employment training and other employment–related programs are available to them.

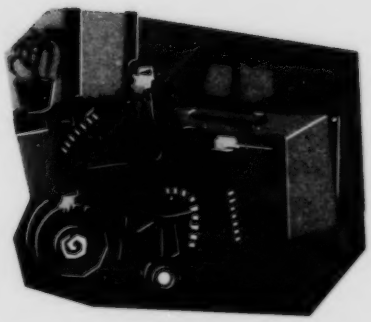
Q&A

How does someone apply for disability benefits?

Application forms for disability benefits can be obtained at the local Employment and Benefits Centre of the Ministry of Human Resources or community advocacy office:

These forms have three parts and each part is filled in by a different person.

- Part A — asks for general information about the applicant and his or her disability. It is completed by the applicant or someone chosen by the applicant.
- Part B — is completed by an assessor who has a professional relationship with the applicant and is familiar with his or her condition. For example, the assessor could be a nurse, social worker, physiotherapist or teacher.
- Part C — is filled in by the applicant's physician who diagnoses the disability and indicates how long it is expected to last.



Completed forms are then mailed to the ministry's Health Services Branch, where they will be reviewed. This process takes four to eight weeks. Applicants will be informed in writing as to whether they have qualified for disability benefits. Anyone who is turned down has the right to appeal. For more information about appeal processes, *see* Appeals Assistance p. 57.

What benefits are available to someone with disabilities?

Depending on income, assets and needs, people who qualify for disability benefits may be eligible for:

- a monthly support and shelter allowance;
- medical benefits, including equipment, supplies and transportation; and
- other benefits like homemaker services, volunteer benefits and low–cost bus passes.

Q&A

Can monthly benefits change?

Yes. Entitlement to disability benefits is reviewed regularly and may change depending on circumstances. For example, many people with disabilities find employment and become financially independent. The support and shelter allowance may be reduced or stopped altogether if the person makes enough money.

What about disability benefits clients who work?

Disability Benefits program clients who get jobs may continue to receive full BC Benefits while earning an additional $200 a month. In addition, 25 per cent of any money the participant earns beyond that amount is exempted from benefit rate calculations.

As well, there are a variety of benefits and programs available to help clients make the transition to work.

For more information about or to apply for the Disability Benefits program, contact the local Employment and Benefits Centre.

For help in filling out the application form, call the toll–free disability benefits line at 1 800 337–3531.

Hardship Assistance

Q&A

Applicants for BC Benefits may not be eligible for assistance due to a variety of circumstances. These can include lack of proper identification or citizenship, excess income or assets, or disqualification for fraud. This may cause undue hardship, especially for families with children. In certain situations, the worker can issue hardship payments once the applicant has proved that all other funding sources have been exhausted.

Hardship assistance is issued for only one month at a time and eligibility must be re–established every month. Most payments must be repaid to the ministry.

A recipient of hardship assistance is not eligible for MHR training programs.

What about people who are awaiting other income?

An individual who is awaiting other income, such as Employment Insurance, Workers' Compensation or Department of Veteran Affairs pensions may be eligible to collect hardship assistance.

For example . . .
People applying for Employment Insurance (El) benefits may require assistance to cover the basic necessities of life, such as food and shelter, until their first EI cheque arrives. These people can apply to the local MHR office for hardship assistance until they receive their EI cheques.

They must first sign an "Assignment of Benefits" form. Hardship assistance issued to employable singles and couples to cover the two–week waiting period is repayable. MHR payments are meant to cover expenses for the month ahead; EI payments cover the time period already gone by. No one is entitled to collect both El benefits and hardship assistance for the same period of time. The "Assignment of Benefits" allows MHR to recover the money directly from EI when the individual has received income from both sources for the same time period.

If EI benefits fall below the level of assistance, the ministry will "top up" to the maximum rate for which the person is eligible.

Hardship Category	Situation	Repayable?
Citizen requirements not met	Persons ineligible for regular benefits because citizenship requirements are not met	No
Strike or lock out	Applicants on strike or locked out if the union is unable to meet their needs	No
Identify not established	Persons who are awaiting identification	No
Social Insurance Number (SIN) card required	While an applicant and/or adult dependant is awaiting a SIN card	No
Sponsorship default	Persons awaiting verification of a sponsorship default	No
Awaiting other income	Persons awaiting other income including retroactive benefits from CPP, OAS, DVA, WCB	Assignment or repayment depending on source of income
Awaiting employment insurance (EI) benefits	Persons waiting for EI benefits	EI Benefits assigned must be repaid; 2 weeks waiting period for EI is repayable
Disentitlement	Families with dependent children who have been disentitled for the following reasons: ❍ Quit work ❍ Fired from employment ❍ Refused employment ❍ Not seeking work ❍ Not participating in Youth Works ❍ Failure to accept or pursue assets ❍ Disposition of assets	Yes
Disqualification for fraud	Families with dependent children who have been disqualified for fraud	Yes
Income in excess	Families with dependent children who have received income in excess of BC Benefits rates, where the excess income could not have reasonably been expected to meet basic needs	Yes
Assets in excess	Families with dependent children, applicants over 65 and persons with disabilities who have assets in excess of specified exemption levels	Yes

Other Benefits

People receiving BC Benefits may be eligible for the following benefits:

Alcohol and Drug Rehabilitation—User Fees

Assistance to eligible persons in approved residential alcohol or drug treatment programs.

- People receiving BC Benefits who are residents of Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCF) funded alcohol and drug residential treatment facilities may be eligible for the standard user fee of $40 per day, and/or a comforts allowance of $85 per month.

- BC Benefits clients who reside in facilities **NOT** funded by the Ministry of Children and Family Development will receive income assistance, youth allowance or disability allowance up to the individual's entitlement level.

Alcohol and Drug Treatment

Payment for alcohol and drug counselling services to eligible persons.

This is in addition to services provided by the Alcohol and Drug Programs Branch of MCF, which are provided free to the public and may be used on a self–referral basis by people receiving BC Benefits.

Expenses for other counselling services may be approved as a pre–training preparation service provided:

- government–funded counselling services in the individual's community are not available;
- the service is non–residential;
- the person has an alcohol or drug dependency which constitutes a barrier to entering the labour market;
- the ministry is of the opinion that the service to be provided will enhance the person's employability;
- a referral to MHR employment and training programs will be made upon completion of the counselling service;
- the complete course of counselling will cost no more than $500; and

- the benefit is issued no more than once in 12 consecutive months.

BC Family Bonus Top–Up Benefit

BC Benefits families who get less than the maximum BC Family Bonus may be eligible for a monthly top-up benefit for each dependent child.

Burial or Cremation

Payment for the necessary costs of funeral services for people who die in B.C. if there are no other immediate sources of funds or assets available to meet these costs.

The ministry respects the rights of the legal representative of the deceased to choose the funeral arrangements. Costs are covered whenever possible.

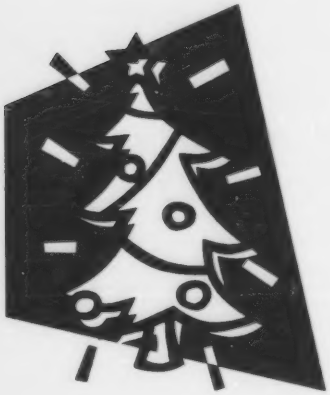
- The ministry will pay a flat rate funeral provider's fee as well as the cost of a casket or cremation urn, burial or cremation plot and cremation fees.
- Family members or other individuals may purchase additional items or services up to a total value of $250.

Camp Fees

Financial help for families receiving income support or adult recipients of disability benefits to fully or partially cover the cost of attending a recognized camp.

- Priority is given to assist dependent children of people who have been receiving BC Benefits for a long time and children with mental and/or physical disabilities.
- Help with camp fees may also be provided for children or adults with mental and/or physical disabilities who are receiving subsidized care in institutions.

Christmas Allowance



An additional benefit paid to people receiving BC Benefits as part of the December cheque to assist with extra expenses at Christmas.

The Christmas allowance is not paid to:

- people who don't receive assistance for the full month of December;
- recipients of hardship assistance;
- a Child in the Home of a Relative;
- persons receiving Senior's Supplement with no dependent family members;
- recipients of medical services only; or
- recipients of the Transition–to–Work Benefit.

The amount of the Christmas Allowance is:

- $35 for a single persons with no dependent children;
- $70 for a childless couple;
- $70 for a family with dependent children PLUS $10 for each dependent child.

Clothing Benefit/ Special Care

Assistance to people receiving BC Benefits who reside in a special care facility other than an alcohol and drug facility for the purchase of necessary clothing. This assistance is available when clothing is not provided by the facility and no alternative resources are available.

Comforts Allowance

$85 per month may be paid to a person receiving BC Benefits who is in:

- a special care facility or a private hospital;
- a hospital because he or she requires extended care;
- an alcohol and drug treatment centre; or
- an emergency shelter or transition house.

Community Volunteer Benefit

A monthly allowance to help BC Benefits clients with the cost of clothing, transportation and other expenses required to take part in a Community Volunteer program.

This is for people who are unable to enter an job or training program at the present time, but who wish to pursue a volunteer placement with a nonprofit community agency in a designated volunteer position.

It is available to BC Benefits clients who:

- are "temporarily excused";
- are receiving disability benefits;
- have dependent children or are CIHRs who are 15 years of age and over;
- are single parents with a child, who is:
  - under the age of seven or with a physical, or
  - mental condition which precludes the parent from being employed.

To be eligible, a person must volunteer for a minimum of 10 hours each month. There is no limit to the length of time an individual can participate in the program.

Co–operative Housing Association Share Purchase Benefit

Assists people receiving BC Benefits with the cost of co–operative housing membership share purchase. This is a repayable benefit recovered by monthly deduction from ongoing entitlement. Maximum benefit is $850 or 50 per cent of the membership shares, whichever is less.

This benefit is available only to BC Benefits clients who have received assistance for at least three consecutive months.

Crisis Benefit

Available to a person receiving BC Benefits if:

- the person or a dependant needs to make an unexpected purchase, has no money, assets or credit; and
- failure to obtain that item will result in imminent danger to the physical health of the person or a dependant, or removal of a child under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*.

Family Maintenance Program

Includes costs incurred for:

- child paternity blood testing;
- transportation costs related to child paternity blood testing; and
- charge backs from the Ministry of Attorney General for legal fees incurred in obtaining maintenance orders on behalf of people receiving BC Benefits. (*See* p. 52 for details on the Family Maintenance program)

Guide Animal Allowance

$62 per month is available to assist in the maintenance of a registered guide animal used by a person receiving BC Benefits or a dependant.

Homemaker Services Program

A means–tested program that provides for short–term, emergency homemaker services.

Funding may be full or partial depending on factors such as family size, income and disability status.

Identification Documents

Pays for BC Identification cards, fees for birth certificates and fees to replace lost Social Insurance Number (SIN) cards.

Payments are made to the agency making the identification document.

Interpreter and Translation Services

Available for non–English speaking or hearing–impaired applicants and their families to assist them in applying for income support.

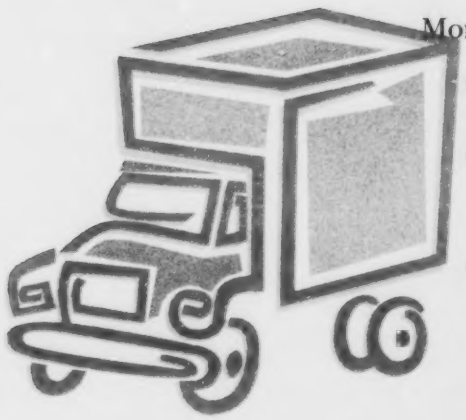
Lost/Stolen Cheques

A lost unendorsed BC Benefits cheque or a lost unendorsed BC Family Bonus cheque may be replaced.

There is no replacement for endorsed cheques or lost/stolen cash. In these circumstances, the person may be eligible for a crisis benefit.

Moving Costs

Assists with moving costs for people receiving BC Benefits (other than transients or recipients of hardship assistance) who have no alternative source of funding.



Money may be provided for the following:

- a move to confirmed employment for someone who is not working;
- a move to another province, territory or country if the move is required to improve the person's living circumstances;
- a move within the local area because the person's rental premises are being sold, demolished or condemned;

- a move within the local area if the person's shelter costs will be significantly reduced; or
- a move to another area of B.C. to avoid an imminent threat to physical safety.

School Start–up Allowance

Paid as part of the August cheque to assist families with children with the extra costs associated with a dependent child's schooling. Children age 5 to 18 in families receiving income assistance, youth allowance, disability allowance and assistance through the Child in the Home of a Relative program are eligible.

The amount is:

- $42 for children age 5–11 years;
- $58 for children age 12 and over.

Security Deposits

Assists people receiving BC Benefits with the cost of securing rental accommodation.

- Issued only in tenancy situations covered by the *Residential Tenancy Act* or for a housing unit owned by a co–operative association. A deposit cannot exceed one–half of the monthly rent.

- These are repayable benefits. People refusing to agree to repayment are not issued a security deposit. Security deposits must be repaid by the BC Benefits recipient whenever a tenancy ends, a subsequent deposit is issued or the individual's file is closed.

- Second and subsequent deposits are repaid by people receiving BC Benefits at a minimum of $10/month.

Training Initiatives Benefit (TIB)

Up to $50 per month to assist with expenses related to a volunteer work experience program for people receiving disability benefits.

- This benefit provides opportunities for those receiving disability benefits to participate in a volunteer work experience in order to develop or enhance employment related or socialization skills.

- Participation is limited to six months within a 36–month period. A six–month extension may be granted.

Transportation/ Living Costs to Attend a Hearing

Provides transportation and living costs to people receiving BC Benefits who are required to attend a hearing related to a child protection or family maintenance proceeding.

User Fees for Special Care

MHR pays the daily user charge for Ministry of Health Services (and Extended Care) and Mental Health Residential Care programs for people receiving BC Benefits.

People in special care facilities may also receive the comforts allowance of $85 per month.

Making the Transition to Work

IN ADDITION . . .
BC Benefits clients who are starting a job may also be eligible for the following benefits to help them make the transition from welfare to work.

Transition–to–Work Benefit

Up to $150 for a maximum of 12 consecutive months is available to families with dependent children who start employment and are no longer eligible for assistance.

- This benefit covers actual child care cost in excess of the child care subsidy paid, and/or transportation costs up to a combined total of $150 per month, per family unit.
- It is a "once–in–a–lifetime" benefit.

Recipients of hardship assistance are not eligible.

Work Clothes Benefit

Assists with the purchase of necessary work clothing for people participating in a BC Benefits program who:

- have a confirmed job;
- have an actual requirement for the work clothes;
- have no other resources to meet this need; and
- are able to demonstrate that without this help they will not obtain the employment.

Recipients of hardship assistance are not eligible.

Work Force Entry Benefit

Provides up to $200 to cover incidental costs related to entry into the work force for a single parent BC Benefits client who begins full–time employment.

- Cannot be issued more than once in a 12–month period.

Work Transportation Benefit

Assists with essential local costs for transportation in the first month of employment for people participating in a BC Benefits program who:

- have a confirmed job;
- have an actual requirement for the transportation;
- have no other resources to meet this need; and
- are able to demonstrate that without this help they will not obtain the employment.

Recipients of hardship assistance are not eligible.

Health Care and Dental Services

All BC Benefits clients receive basic Ministry of Health Services (MHS) medical coverage through the Medical Services Plan (MSP) and Pharmacare programs. In addition, some clients and their families also have access to enhanced MHR–sponsored medical coverage.

To receive medical coverage, clients must meet MSP criteria. They must:

- have the legal right to reside in Canada;
- make their home in B.C.;
- have resided for three continuous months in B.C.; and
- be physically present in B.C. for six months per calendar year.

Basic Medical Coverage

All BC Benefits clients receive basic Ministry of Health Services Medical coverage through the MSP and Pharmacare programs.

Medical Services Plan (MSP) Benefits (Ministry of Health Services program)

The MSP available to people receiving BC Benefits is identical to the plan offered to the general public. MHR's role is limited to applying to the Ministry of Health Services on behalf of BC Benefits clients and their dependants.

MHR has no authority to meet the costs of medical services not covered by MSP.

Pharmacare (Ministry of Health Services program)

The Ministry of Health Services Pharmacare Program assists B.C. residents with costs of purchasing prescription drugs and medical supplies. Pharmacare offers a series of plans or categories, three of which cover people receiving BC Benefits:

Plan A:

- Provides Pharmacare benefits to residents of B.C. over age 65, including those receiving BC Benefits.
- Requires seniors to pay for dispensing fees up to a maximum of $200 per year.

Plan C:

- Provides Pharmacare benefits at no charge to all BC Benefits clients, except seniors, who are eligible for either basic or enhanced MHR–sponsored MSP coverage.

- Requires people covered under this plan obtain benefits to provide their PHN (Personal Health Number) or CareCard to a registered supplier within B.C.

Plan T:

- Provides Pharmacare coverage for a 48–hour period for recipients of hardship assistance.

Enhanced Medical Coverage

As well as meeting MSP requirements, BC Benefits clients must fit into at least one of the following categories to be eligible for enhanced medical coverage:

- a Disability Benefits client (including dependants)
- a single parent (including dependants)
- a single person with a level one disability or a couple where both adults have a level one disability.

In addition, the following individuals retain their enhanced medical coverage:

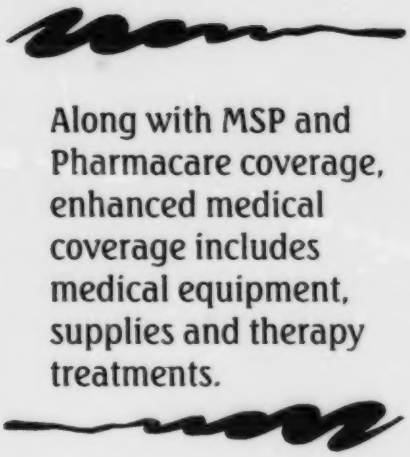
- single parents (including dependants) who find employment retain their enhanced medical coverage for one year as long as they remain a single parent, and live and work in B.C.

- Disability Benefits clients (including dependants) who find employment retain their enhanced medical coverage as long as they live and work in B.C.

- People over 65 who, before turning 65 were receiving enhanced coverage, retain that coverage as long as they live in B.C.

- People who were eligible for enhanced coverage, but no longer qualify for financial assistance because they are receiving Old Age Pension, CPP or CPP disability, retain their enhanced coverage as long as they live in B.C.

Along with MSP and Pharmacare coverage, enhanced coverage may include the following medical services.


Along with MSP and Pharmacare coverage, enhanced medical coverage includes medical equipment, supplies and therapy treatments.

Medical Equipment

Essential medical equipment is available to people who are eligible for enhanced MHR–sponsored medical coverage to prevent medical or health deterioration. Where appropriate, a basic mobility aid can be provided to an individual who is not mobile.

- Requests for the purchase of essential medical equipment must come from a health–care professional and must be pre–approved by MHR prior to purchase.
- People living in Ministry of Health Services–funded facilities are not eligible for medical equipment from MHR. These needs must be met through MHS.
- Medical equipment purchased becomes the property of the individual. People are encouraged to donate equipment to an appropriate agency if they no longer need it and it cannot be exchanged or traded to meet a current need.

Medical Supplies

Essential, prescribed medical supplies are available to people eligible for enhanced MHR–sponsored medical coverage in order to prevent medical or health deterioration.

- Requests for the purchase of essential medical supplies must come from a physician and must be pre–approved by MHR prior to purchase.
- Most over–the–counter medications, vitamins or other minor medical items are the responsibility of the individual.
- People receiving BC Benefits who live in Ministry of Health Services–funded facilities are not eligible for medical supplies from MHR. These needs must be met through MHS.

Physiotherapy, Massage Therapy and Chiropractic Services

Essential physiotherapy, massage therapy, and chiropractic treatments are available to people with an acute need who are eligible for enhanced MHR–sponsored medical coverage when those services are not available through other existing programs or community resources.

- MSP covers physiotherapy, massage therapy and chiropractic treatments to a maximum of 12 visits per calendar year for each type of treatment for both recipients of enhanced and basic MHR–sponsored medical coverage.
- People receiving BC Benefits who access therapy services through MSP are not charged user fees.
- MHR can consider extensions of these treatments for people eligible for enhanced MHR–sponsored medical coverage when local hospital out–patient facilities are not available. Extensions may not exceed a total of 12 treatments of combined therapy per calendar year.
- MHR extensions are only considered when there is an acute need, not chronic. Acute means severe and immediate whereas chronic refers to ongoing conditions.

Hearing Aids

Hearing aids and associated services and supplies may be available to people who are eligible for enhanced MHR–sponsored medical coverage, but who lack the financial resources to meet the required expenses. This assistance may also be granted to individuals for whom lack of a hearing aid represents a direct barrier to employment.

Orthotics and Bracing Devices

Basic, conservative and medically essential orthotics and bracing are available to people eligible for enhanced MHR–sponsored medical coverage to prevent medical or health deterioration and to assist with basic ambulation.

- Orthotic and bracing devices may be provided when no other funding is available (i.e. Pharmacare, ICBC, WCB, DVA, private insurance coverage).

- Individuals living in Ministry of Health Services–funded facilities may also be considered.

Medical Transportation

People eligible for enhanced MHR–sponsored medical coverage may be provided with assistance in meeting extraordinary transportation, accommodation, and other costs associated with essential medical treatment.

- Expenses for routine medical visits should normally be met through monthly support benefits.

- All alternative options and resources (i.e. family and volunteer agencies) must be explored by the individual prior to consideration of coverage by the ministry.

- Extraordinary medical needs are defined as those needs significantly in excess of those which can be reasonably incorporated in normal daily living.

- Essential medical treatment is defined as treatment provided under MSP and/or a hospital program.

- Taxi fares are not routinely provided and are only considered when no other options are available and the need is medically documented.

Diet Benefit

Assistance is available to help people eligible for enhanced MHR–sponsored medical coverage meet costs associated with unusually expensive diets required by specific medical conditions or diet needs. This is a monthly benefit.

The amount of the diet benefit depends on the specific medical condition:

- $10 for a restricted sodium diet;
- $15 for diabetes;
- $30 for kidney dialysis, unless the person is covered by the Ministry of Health Services kidney dialysis service;
- $40 for a high protein diet;
- $40 for a gluten–free diet;
- $40 for dysphagia;
- $50 for cystic fibrosis.

Persons eligible for a high protein or dysphagia diet benefit are also eligible for a $30 payment towards the purchase of a blender.

Persons with more than one medical condition are eligible to receive only the highest single amount.

Women who are pregnant or have a new–born child may get help to cover extra costs.

Natal Benefit

Monthly benefits of $35 are available to people eligible for enhanced MHR–sponsored medical coverage who are pregnant or have a child under the age of seven months. This assists these clients with meeting miscellaneous extra costs associated with the prenatal and postnatal periods.

- The natal benefit may be approved for a period beginning with the confirmation of pregnancy and extending up to six months following the birth of the child.

- If there is a child under the age of seven months in the family, the benefit may be approved for a period beginning with the date of application and extending up to six months following the birth of the child.

- In the event of a multiple pregnancy or a multiple birth, the benefit may be increased to a maximum of $70 per month.

- Hardship recipients and medical–services–only recipients are not eligible for a natal benefit.

Optical Services

Basic optical services are available for adults eligible for enhanced MHR–sponsored medical coverage. All children whose families receive BC Benefits are eligible for basic optical services under the Healthy Kids program" (*See* p. 63.)

- Optical services coverage is for "hardware" (frames, lenses) and associated service charges related to optical devices.

- MHR does not pay for eye examinations (covered by MSP), any optical therapy, or low–vision aids.

- Basic optical services include a complete set of single vision or bifocal lenses, frames within the limits of the frame rate set by MHR, necessary repairs to lenses and frames, and a case when new lenses are provided.

- Provision of glasses is limited to once in four years for adults and once a year for children with valid prescriptions. New lenses may be provided when a significant change in prescription is confirmed by an optometrist or ophthalmologist.

Dental and Orthodontic Services

Basic dental and orthodontic services are available for adults eligible for enhanced MHR–sponsored medical coverage. All children whose families receive BC Benefits are eligible for basic dental services under the Healthy Kids program. (*See* p. 63.)

Emergency dental treatment for the relief of pain and emergency denture repairs will also be provided.

- Clients must be eligible for and in receipt of enhanced MHR–sponsored medical coverage for six

M121

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continuous months before basic and pre–authorized dental services will be considered.

- Emergency treatment for the relief of pain is available to adults in the six month waiting period and to those receiving basic MHR–sponsored medical coverage and hardship assistance.

- Dental services for the relief of pain are available, on a pre–authorized basis, for people who have used up their annual limit.

Medical Services Only

Enhanced MHR-sponsored medical coverage is available to individuals who are no longer eligible to receive direct assistance but are eligible for medical benefits under BC Benefits and Disability Benefits legislation.

- Single parents (and dependants) who find employment are no longer eligible for income assistance or youth allowance. However, they retain Enhanced MHR-sponsored medical coverage for one year, as long as they remain single parents, are employed and live in B.C.

- People with a full Disability designation (and dependants) who find employment are no longer eligible for Disability Benefits. However, they retain Enhanced MHR-sponsored medical coverage as long as they work and live in B.C.

- People who turn 65 years old and over, and are in receipt of Enhanced or Basic MHR-sponsored medical coverage, will retain that coverage while living in B.C.

- People who were eligible for Enhanced coverage, but become ineligible for financial assistance because they are receiving federal income security support, retain coverage when residing in B.C.

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Family Maintenance Program (FMP)

People in need are required to seek all avenues of income before applying for BC Benefits including pursuing legally–ordered maintenance payments.

People in need are required to seek all avenues of income before applying for BC Benefits. This includes pursuing legally–ordered maintenance payments from an estranged spouse.

The following applicants must 'assign their maintenance rights' to government at the time of application in order to be eligible for income assistance, youth allowance or disability allowance:

- a spouse who is entitled to maintenance (anyone who is married and separated, divorced, or separated from a two–year common–law relationship);
- a spouse who has one or more dependent children from a former relationship;
- a single person who has one or more dependent children;
- a person under 19 years of age who is not residing with his or her parents; and
- a person who is receiving income assistance on behalf of a child of a relative residing in his or her home.

(Applicants for hardship assistance are not required to assign their maintenance rights.)

This means that government can act on behalf of these clients to obtain, change and enforce maintenance orders. Government will also defend an order if the paying partner attempts to reduce the payment. Both the federal government (*Divorce Act*) and the provincial government (Amendments to the *Family Relations Act*) provide Child Support Guidelines to obtain fair and adequate orders. Orders can be enrolled with the Ministry of Attorney General's (AG) Family Maintenance Enforcement program for collection.

When maintenance orders are paid on time, clients receive an incentive. Those with children will keep up to $100 per month above their monthly BC Benefits entitlements; those without children keep up to $50 per month.

When maintenance orders are not paid to BC Benefits clients, the Ministry of Human Resources will cover those payments up to the prescribed BC Benefit levels. The paying partner is required to repay the amount to the government. The maintenance order can remain in place even when the client no longer requires BC Benefits. This is especially important for working families who continue to receive these payments once they are working.

How does assignment work?

Once a BC Benefits client assigns her/his rights to maintenance payments, the government assumes both the right and the responsibility to:

- obtain or vary a maintenance order from the court;
- defend an agreement or order if the paying parent attempts to reduce the monthly payment;
- file maintenance agreements with the court;
- enforce maintenance orders; and
- receive payment under maintenance orders.

This means that the client:

- receives regular monthly income from government;
- is assisted through MHR's Family Maintenance program to get an agreement or court order for maintenance at no cost;
- is registered with the AG's Family Maintenance Enforcement program;
- does not have to pursue maintenance payments on her/his own; and
- retains the right to be informed of all steps the government takes on his/her behalf under both the FMP and the FMEP programs.

MHR may, with the client's written consent, continue to pursue maintenance payments after the client's BC Benefits file is closed.

The province of British Columbia has agreements in place with other jurisdictions including other Canadian provinces, every American state and members of the British Commonwealth for the reciprocal enforcement of maintenance orders.

Q&A

What if there is the potential for violence?

Family Maintenance program staff assess each case and are trained to identify indicators of violence. A program worker has the authority to defer the pursuit of maintenance payments where such action might place the family in jeopardy.

For more information, contact the local Employment and Benefits Centre.

Prevention, Compliance and Enforcement

The function of the Prevention, Compliance and Enforcement (PCE) Branch is to combat fraud and abuse and to increase public confidence that taxpayer dollars are being directed only to those British Columbians truly in need. The PCE Branch consists of three distinct components:

- the Prevention program,
- the Compliance program, and
- the Enforcement program.

Prevention Program

The objectives of the Prevention program are:

1. to prevent and deter fraud and abuse through a series of checks and balances built into the application process.

2. to adopt procedures and systems changes that prevent overpayments to people who are not eligible or have not accessed all other sources of income.

A major objective of the Prevention program is to prevent fraud and abuse through checks and balances built into the application process.

The Prevention program consists of the following elements.

The Early Detection and Prevention (EDP) Program

Detects and prevents fraud, by selecting and screening categories of high risk applicants during the application/ intake process, so that assistance is provided only to those eligible.

Information Sharing

Identifies people who are receiving duplicate benefits to which they are not entitled, who are not declaring other sources of income or who are eligible for benefits from other federal or provincial benefit programs. Information verification is conducted only to determine eligibility. Agencies include, but are not limited to:

- Canada Custom and Revenue Agency
- Human Resources Development Canada
- Workers' Compensation Board
- Insurance Corporation of British Columbia
- Ministry of Advanced Education–BC Student Assistance Program
- Canada Pension Plan
- Department of Citizenship and Immigration

The Identification Guide

Assists MHR staff to identify forged or replicated documents and to detect false identity.

Compliance Program

PCE eligibility officers conduct eligibility reviews targeted at specific aspects of the income support programs susceptible to fraud and error.

Enforcement Program

The enforcement component of PCE consists of ministry investigators (MIs) and assistant ministry investigators (AMIs). MIs investigate serious allegations of fraud.

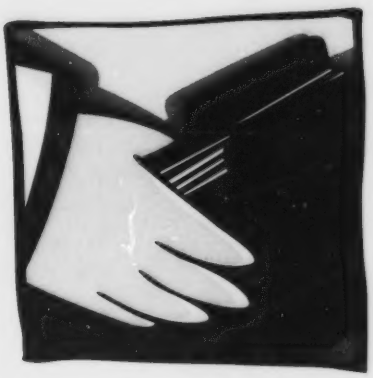
Welfare fraud is a criminal offence. Anyone who has information related to the potential fraud or abuse of the welfare system should report it to the nearest MHR Employment and Benefits Centre.

The identity of the complainant is protected. Complainants may choose to submit the information anonymously.

The ministry investigates all complaints. Because of confidentiality rules, the results of these investigations cannot be revealed to the complainant. However, if criminal charges result, the court proceedings are public.

Appeals Assistance

Voicing and Resolving Concerns



The Ministry of Human Resources is committed to ensuring that all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. People participating in BC Benefits programs have a right to expect quality service, equitable access to programs and transparent decision–making.

Ministry staff must work within the bounds of the five BC Benefits acts, regulations and policy when making decisions about an individual's eligibility and entitlement. Ministry decisions can have a significant impact on the lives of BC Benefits applicants and clients, so there are avenues to settle disagreements and to ensure that everyone is treated equally and fairly under the law.

Assistance is a sensitive issue, and differences of opinion may arise. Someone receiving BC Benefits who has a problem in dealing with the ministry should first try talking the problem through with the worker. If the worker is unable to resolve the problem or if the complaint relates to the worker, the person should make an appointment with the district supervisor. Often disputes can be settled in the local Employment and Benefits Centre.

Most decisions that involve the denial, reduction or discontinuation of assistance or a benefit under the BC Benefits legislation can be appealed. Access to job and training programs cannot be appealed; nor can disagreements with administrative processes, such as the method of cheque pick–up or a request for a different worker. However, such issues can be handled informally at the local level and every effort is made to come to an acceptable resolution.

What happens when a BC Benefits client is unhappy with a decision to deny, reduce or discontinue assistance?

BC Benefits clients can appeal decisions that deny, reduce or discontinue BC Benefits if they feel the decision is wrong. All types of assistance are subject to appeal. These include monthly income support issued under Youth Works, Income Assistance, and the Disability Benefits programs, health care benefits, supplementary benefits,

child care, employment and training benefits, homemaker services, crisis grants for emergencies and hardship assistance.

The individual can apply to receive an appeal benefit during the appeal process provided a Promise to Repay form is signed. If the appeal is successful, he or she keeps the appeal benefit. If not, this benefit (with the exception of the child care subsidy) must be repaid.

Reconsideration

People who dispute decisions concerning eligibility for benefits under the *BC Benefits Acts* should first ask the district supervisor in the local Employment and Benefits Centre to review the decision.

If the issue cannot be resolved by local office staff, the person can then take the problem to the BC Benefits coordinator (BCBC) for reconsideration as part of the formal appeal process.

BC Benefits applicant and clients can appeal decisions that deny, reduce or discontinue benefits if they feel the decision is wrong.

Appeal Tribunal

If a person is still dissatisfied after the reconsideration, he or she can appeal to a community–based Appeal Tribunal. Tribunals decide whether or not the ministry applied the appropriate legislation and regulations correctly. To submit an appeal to the tribunal, the dissatisfied person must complete and send in a Notice to Proceed to Tribunal **within seven days** of the BCBC decision. Complete instructions are contained in the Appeals Kit.

If the appeal to tribunal isn't made within seven days, the BCBC's decision is deemed to have been accepted by the person and the matter is closed.

Tribunals consist of three people: the nominee of the person making the appeal; the ministry's nominee; and a chair chosen by the two nominees. The nominee of the person making the appeal must agree to act on his or her behalf and cannot be a relative or a dependant. All tribunal members must be impartial and independent.

BC Benefits clients are responsible for presenting their own cases. They may do so themselves or have someone assist or represent them. Community advocates often fulfil this function. Ministry staff can refer a client to an advocate, if requested.

By majority opinion, the tribunal can either confirm the reconsideration decision or conclude that some or all of the decision should not stand. The BC Benefits client will receive a written decision.

BC Benefits Appeal Board

If a BC Benefits client or the ministry is convinced that the tribunal decided in error, an appeal to the BC Benefits Appeal Board is the next step. The appeal board examines tribunal decisions that either party believes to be incorrect on a point of law or excess of jurisdiction. The appeal must be filed **within 30 business days** of the tribunal decision. People may wish to seek the assistance of a legal advocacy group if involved in an appeal with the board.

Board members are appointed by the Minister of Human Resources and are experts in areas such as administrative law, appeals and arbitration processes, income support programs, and health, education or community programs. Unlike tribunals, the board members review only written submissions.

When the board receives a Notice of Appeal from a BC Benefits client, it notifies the ministry and sends a copy of the submission within **five business days**. The ministry has **15 business days** to respond. The board will send a copy of the ministry's response to the person, who will then have **10 business** days to respond if he or she wishes.

If the ministry appeals a tribunal decision, the board will notify the individual involved in writing. He or she does not have to respond, but is encouraged to since this is the only opportunity to have the submission considered by the board. Written submissions must be sent to the board within **15 business days** of notification of the appeal. The board will submit its written decision to both parties.

Appeal Board decisions can now be found on the Internet at **www.bcbab.gov.bc.ca**. It should be noted that appeals are decided on a case–by–case basis, and are not precedent–setting.

Judicial Review

There is one final step when the BC Benefits client or the ministry remains unconvinced of the fairness of the appeal board's decision. That involves referring the matter to the Supreme Court of British Columbia for a Judicial Review.

The court hears cases where an individual or the ministry believes the appeal board made an error in its interpretation of law or acted outside of its jurisdiction. Judicial review decisions set legal precedent, unlike the decisions of the appeal board or tribunals. **It is recommended that people taking this step seek legal representation for judicial reviews.**

Additional Help for British Columbians in Need

Seniors Supplement

The Seniors Supplement program assures a minimum monthly income for B.C. residents who receive the federal Old Age Security pension and Guaranteed Income Supplement, or the federal Spouse's Allowance. If a senior's total income (federal pension and any other earned or unearned income) falls below the level guaranteed by the province, a supplement is provided to make up the difference. The maximum supplement is $49.30 per month for a single person and $60.25 per month for a couple.

No application is required for this program. The seniors supplement is paid automatically, based on information supplied by the Old Age Security Division, Human Resources Development Canada.

For more information call:

Victoria:	250 387-4331
Lower Mainland:	604 682-0391
Rest of B.C.:	call toll free 1 800 665-2656

Bus Pass

An annual pass for public transit systems is available to assist low–income seniors or persons with disabilities to participate more fully in their communities. Applicants must apply each year.

Annual bus passes may be purchased by people:

- who are receiving the federal Old Age Security (OAS), and either the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) or Spouse's Allowance; or who are only ineligible for those benefits because they have not resided in Canada for 10 years;
- who are age 60 to 64 and receiving BC Benefits;
- who are receiving disability benefits.

The cost of the bus pass is $45 per calendar year.

For more information call:

Victoria: 250 387–4331
Lower Mainland: 604 682–0391
Rest of B.C.: call toll free 1 800 665–2656

Special Transportation Subsidy (STS)

Special Transportation Subsidy (STS) is provided to disability benefits recipients who live in areas where the Bus Pass program is available, but are unable to use public transportation due to their disability; or because it would make their disability worse.

To qualify for the STS, people must:

- be in receipt of a disability allowance under the Disability Benefits program;
- reside in an area where the Bus Pass program is available;
- provide certification from a physician verifying:
  - that they are unable to use the Bus Pass program or any other form of subsidized public transportation service (such as handyDART and Taxi Savers) due to their disability, or, that their disability would be aggravated by using public transportation; and00
  - the alternative form of transportation required to accommodate the disability (examples: operating a personal vehicle or paying others for transportation).

BC Family Bonus

The BC Family Bonus is a program administered by the Ministry of Finance that provides a tax–free payment to moderate–income families with dependent children.

The BC Family Bonus makes it easier for families with children to leave and stay off welfare because they can continue to receive the bonus for their children while working or going to school.

Families receive the BCFB as part of a payment called the Child Tax Benefit (CCTB). Also included in this payment are the federal Child Tax Benefit, the National Child Benefit Supplement (NCBS) and the BC Earned Income Benefit (BCEIB).

The CCTB payment is calculated on the previous year's income tax return, so it is important that all families, including people receiving BC Benefits remember to file their returns on time. BC Benefits clients should also know that lump sum CCTB payments do affect BC Benefits entitlement.

BC Benefits clients can receive the CCTB through either the mail or electronic deposits to their bank accounts.

For more information on the CCTB, or any of the individual payments, please contact Canada Custom and Revenue Agency at 1 800 387–1193.

Healthy Kids

Healthy Kids is a program under BC Benefits that extends basic dental and vision care to children in low– and moderate–income families, and to children receiving services through MHR who are not eligible for enhanced MHR–sponsored coverage. Healthy Kids removes one of the barriers to moving from welfare to work.

Healthy Kids benefits are available to children age 18 and under in low– and moderate–income families who are not already covered by federal or employer–sponsored insurance plans. Eligibility for this program is determined using the Medical Services Plan (MSP) premium subsidy formula.

Healthy Kids removes one of the barriers to moving from welfare to work by extending basic dental and vision care to children in low– and moderate–income B.C. families.

There are limitations to the total amount covered in a year.

Children in low–income families who receive any level of MSP premium assistance may be eligible for full (100 per cent) basic optical and dental coverage under Healthy Kids.

To receive the benefit, families should show their dentist or optician that they are receiving Medical Services Plan premium assistance. To learn more about the Healthy Kids initiative, please call the Ministry of Human Resources Health Services Branch at 1 800 748–1144.

(Note: Healthy Kids is not a reimbursement program. Families will not be reimbursed by the ministry if they have already paid a dentist, or other health care practitioner for services.)

The B.C. Healthy Kids Dental Van provides preventive education and basic dental services to low-income children eligible for the Healthy Kids program in many northern communities.

Adults receiving BC Benefits are also able to use the dental van's services.

Community Services Fund

The Community Services Fund helps community groups in urban centres provide services to people who experience multiple barriers to independence. Service can also provide more support for those who wish to participate in pre–employment and employment training programs.

Services supported through this fund are targeted to people with multiple barriers, including:

- persons with a diagnosed mental illness;
- persons with an identified substance abuse problem;
- persons with less than grade 10 who have an identified problem with basic literacy;
- any age group where high unemployment exists; and
- homeless persons.

Phone the nearest MHR regional office for additional information.

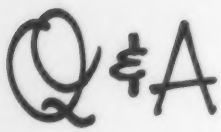
Cold and Wet Weather Strategy

The Ministry of Human Resources teams with community partners to add emergency shelter beds and improve co-ordination of shelter services to homeless people over the cold and wet weather months.

Child Care Subsidy

The child care subsidy is a monthly payment that helps B.C. families with low and moderate incomes meet the cost of child care.

Parents may use the subsidy to help cover the fees of whatever kind of child care— licensed or licence–not–required, in the child's own home or elsewhere—best suits their needs and the needs of their children.



How does someone apply for a child care subsidy?

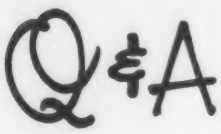
Anyone can apply to the Ministry of Human Resources (MHR) for a child care subsidy.

A MHR worker will meet with the applicant and conduct an interview to determine whether the applicant is eligible for subsidy. The MHR worker will calculate the subsidy amount based on the type of care, the age of the child and the family income. The MHR worker will also assess the number of days of care per month that the applicant can claim (up to a maximum of 20 days) based on the applicant's work and/or school schedule or other requirements.

The MHR worker will then prepare an Authorization for Child Care Subsidy and send one copy to the applicant and one copy to the child care provider. Based on the Authorization, the child care provider will submit monthly claims to MHR Child Care Accounts for the subsidy for that particular child.

Who gets the child care subsidy — the parent or the child care provider?

The child care subsidy is paid directly to the child care provider—with one exception. When child care is provided in the child's own home, the subsidy is paid to the parent who assumes the role of employer, paying the child care provider and being responsible for any contributions required by the Workers' Compensation Board, Employment Insurance Benefits, Canada Pension Plan, and Canada Customs and Revenue Agency.



What happens if the child care provider charges more than the subsidy?

If the child care provider charges more than the subsidy, the parent is responsible for paying the difference between the subsidy amount and the child care provider's fee. That means:

- A parent who qualifies for a full subsidy pays the difference between the subsidy amount and the child care provider's fee.
- A parent who qualifies for a partial subsidy pays the remaining portion of the subsidy (this is called the parent portion) as well as the difference between the subsidy amount and the child care provider's fee.

Employment Services

Introduction

Working in partnership with individuals, employers, unions, community organizations and other partners, the Labour Market Division of MHR provides programs to help youth and adults develop the skills they need to obtain or retain employment in a continuously changing labour market. Employment services are available to people receiving BC Benefits and other British Columbians who:

- encounter barriers to workforce participation;
- have disabilities; or
- are employed and require skills upgrading to remain productive and take advantage of emerging opportunities in new and expanding industries.

Program Delivery

Employment services are coordinated and/or delivered through the Employment Services Centres across the province. (*See* MHR Directory p. 85.) Services can be delivered by ministry staff, contract service providers, community resources or any combination of the three.

For more information about employment services, contact the nearest Employment Services Centre or check the Ministry Web site at **www.mhr.gov.bc.ca/programs/employ_serv.htm**

Work Connections

Work Connections are front–end employment services whose goal is to help BC Benefits applicants and clients improve the effectiveness of their job search, and find and keep long–term employment. Services available include:

- A *BC Benefits Orientation Video Session* provides information on eligibility, rights and obligations in applying for assistance.
- *Job Placement Services* such as networking assistance, job information and resources. Also serves as a point of contact for employers seeking employees.
- *Self Directed Services* such as job search orientation, resume writing, faxing, photocopying, internet access, labour market information, and access to community resources.
- *Employment Counseling Services* provides individual assistance and support including career counseling; assessment of skills, interests, and aptitudes; and assistance in career research and exploration.
- *Entrepreneurial Exploration Services* provides group services for individuals who want to explore starting their own business. Services include self–assessment, exploration of self–employment requirements, information on community needs, resources and business plan development.
- *Job Club Services* provide assessment of skills, interests, aptitudes and values; interviewing and job search skills and techniques; and ongoing job search support in a group setting.

Employability Skills

Employability Skills is an umbrella term for a range of labour market support services that address BC Benefits clients specific skills gaps, improve their work–related skills and increase their opportunities for success in finding and keeping employment. Specific services available include:

- *Employment Training* which may include career planning and personal management skills, employment maintenance skills (e.g. team work and conflict resolution), work experience and job search skills, or specific training.
- *Basic Education* which may include academic skills and upgrading, English Language Training, or Adult Basic Education.
- *Volunteer Incentive program* which provides clients with a time–limited opportunity to gain volunteer work experience and develop confidence in preparation for further training and/or employment.
- *Self–Employment program* which provides services and support to BC Benefits clients who are motivated and have the capacity to be self-employed.

For more information about employment services available for Youth Works and Income Assistance clients, contact the nearest Employment Services Centre.

Q&A

Self–Employment Program

Who's eligible?

Clients who have been receiving BC Benefits for three consecutive months and have a strong desire to start and operate a small business may be eligible to be referred to the Self–Employment program. Participation is conditional on an assessment of suitability, a ministry approved business plan, and satisfactory progress towards developing a viable small business judged against the agreed–upon business plan.

Clients in the Self–Employment program receive a variety of services and supports to help them make their business a success.

What kind of services does a client receive?

A client receives:

- help with developing a viable business plan
- on–going advice from a mentor with small business experience
- training, tailored to their needs, in areas such as market research, business accounting, financial forecasting, promotion, risk analysis, and customer relations.

Does a Self–Employment client also have to look for a job?

No. People participating in the Self–Employment program are expected to work full–time at their business. This meets the requirement looking for work.

How long can someone take part in the program?

Youth Works and Income Assistance program clients can take part for up to 12 months. People receiving disability benefits can participate for up to 18 months.

How does the program work?

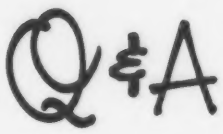
Those applying to take part in the program must develop and receive approval of a viable business plan. They will work closely with a business advisor. Income and assets acquired while in the program must be reported monthly. Six months into the program, the progress of each participant is reviewed.

What are the client's responsibilities?

In addition to working full–time on their business activities, clients will also be expected to:

- sign an employability agreement;
- work closely with a business mentor to develop an approved business plan;
- operate according to the business plan;
- take part in all entrepreneurial training required;

- maintain regular contact with their business mentor;
- provide monthly summary reports on finances and progress;
- make monthly income and asset reports to their financial assistance worker; and,
- take part in a mandatory six month review.



Is there a limit to the amount of income clients can earn without their BC Benefits being affected?

There is no limit to the amount a person can earn if they reinvest the funds into their business or use the funds to pay business expenses. Businesses may maintain up to $5,000 in a cash asset account that has been approved as part of the business plan. Business income is also exempt if it is used for approved renovations of up to $5,000 to the client's residence, when the residence is used for business purposes. Business income used by the client for non–business purposes is included in the calculation of income assistance benefits.

Jobs Partnership Program Pilot

The Jobs Partnership program is a public/private partnership between the Ministry of Human Resources and agencies representing the British Columbia Chamber of Commerce, and the Council of Tourism Associations of British Columbia (COTA). The Jobs Partnership program is an employment program that focuses on job placement, not job training. The program is designed to help people who are ready to work to find long–term employment quickly.

Q&A

Who is eligible for the program?

The Jobs Partnership program is available to people who have applied for, or are participating in the Youth Works or Income Assistance programs. People who receive disability benefits are also welcome to participate.

Who delivers the program?

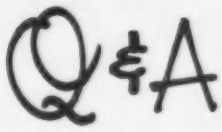
The program is delivered by the following two partnership agencies:

- West Coast Group (representing the BC Chamber of Commerce);
- Destinations (representing COTA).

How does the program work?

The partner agencies find job placements and provide appropriate, individualized pre–employment services to BC Benefits clients. Once the client is employed, the agency will support the job placement for 19 months.

Workplace–Based Training



Workplace–Based Training is a program that provides eligible Youth Works/Income Assistance clients with a one–year employment opportunity that includes formal and on–the–job training. Employers receive a training credit of up to $2,500 per client, to offset the costs of hiring and training the new employee.

What conditions must the employer meet to receive the credit?

To receive the credit, employers must:

- provide full–time work to the client for at least a year;
- pay all employee wages and benefits;
- take part in developing and carrying out a training plan for the participant; and,
- guarantee that the person hired will not displace any existing employee from their job.

Employers receive a training credit to offset the costs of hiring and training the new employee.

Who delivers the program?

The WBT program is delivered through the following contractors representing employment sectors and geographic regions:

- West Coast Group — (Business Works)
- Council of Tourism Associations of British Columbia (COTA) — (Destinations)
- Open Learning Agency — (BC Works)
- Association of Service Providers for Employment and Career Training — (ASPECT)
- The Kelowna Economic Recovery and Employment Development Association — (KEREDA)
- Kopar Administration Ltd.
- Immigrant Services Society (ISS)/Multi Lingual Orientation Service Association for Immigrant Communities (MOSAIC) — (Crossroads)

Job Start

Job Start provides employment for youth who are not in school and who have little or no work experience. This program is designed to help youth gain their first work experience, while developing the marketable skills and sound work habits needed to get long–term employment.

The role of employers is to hire, train, supervise and pay youth for approved positions. Employers receive a wage subsidy. Reimbursement is 50 per cent of the provincial minimum wage for up to 360 hours. Eligible employers include businesses, agricultural operations, not–for–profit organizations, First Nations organizations, educational institutions and local governments.

MHR selects host agencies to deliver and administer Job Start. These agencies are responsible for providing information, applications and approvals for positions. For more information about this program, employers can contact the toll–free line 1 800 229-6884 to find out the name of the host agency in their area.

Q&A

Who is eligible for the program?

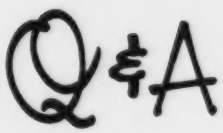
Youth qualify for the Job Start program if they:

- are unemployed;
- are legally entitled to work in Canada;
- are permanent residents in B.C.;
- are between the ages of 17–24;
- are not immediately planning on returning to full–time studies; and
- have limited work experience and no direct experience related to the funded position.

How does a young person apply for the Job Start program?

Youth are encouraged to participate in Job Start in two ways. First, young people can directly approach an employer they are interested in working for to see if they would like to take part in the program. Second, youth can also contact the host agency in their region for more information on employment opportunities available. There is no form for the young person to fill out.

Employers interested in hiring a youth must complete an application form that is then submitted to a host agency for approval. Once approved, employers use a variety of methods to locate and hire youth.



Which employers can apply?

Employers can apply if they:

- are located and operating in British Columbia;
- are in good standing with the Workers' Compensation Board, Employment Standards Branch and Human Rights Commission;
- can offer a minimum of 25 hours a week of full– or part–time employment;
- can provide young people with an opportunity to gain work experience, develop good work habits and the skills needed to keep working; and
- intend to continue to employ the youth after the funding period.

Where can an employer get an application for funding?

Host agencies delivering the Job Start program on behalf of MHR have applications available in April each year. After April, employers can get information on Job Start host agencies:

- by calling 1 800 229-6884
- or, by browsing the provincial Web site for youth at **www.youth.gov.bc.ca**

Job Start is one of 12 employment programs of Youth Options BC, a provincial government initiative to provide work experience opportunities and improve access to post–secondary education for young people.

What positions are eligible for funding?

Preference will be given to positions that will give youth the work experience that will help them develop employability skills. Positions must provide youth with continuous employment to a maximum of 360 hours, at a minimum of 25 hours per week. As well, to be eligible for funding, positions must be in addition to the employer's regular number of positions or fill a position that is currently vacant.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS)

Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) provides support, assistance, and access to training and employment for persons with physical and mental disabilities. The program helps people set realistic vocational goals, and secure and maintain gainful employment. Services are delivered by Employment Services Centre staff, service providers under contract with MHR, existing community services or a combination thereof depending on community needs.

VRS and its community–based service providers help individuals gain employment by:

- providing access to needed supports for education and training leading to employment;
- working with post–secondary and other educational institutions to ensure clients are able to access education and training leading to employment;
- working with employers to ensure clients are successful in forming long–term attachment to the workforce.

British Columbia receives a total of $27 million from the federal government through the Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities (EAPD) Agreement. Canada shares in the operating costs incurred by the province in providing programs and services, such as VRS Services.

For more information about VRS programs and eligibility, contact the nearest Employment Services Centre.

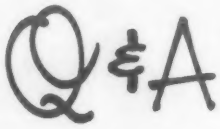
Q&A

Who may be eligible for VRS?

To be considered for VRS assistance, an applicant must be:

- a resident of British Columbia;
- at least 16 years of age;
- have a permanent disability that prevents or hinders him or her from obtaining gainful employment; and
- through assessment, have a realistic potential to benefit from VRS.

Applicants will be required to complete an application form and provide a medical assessment from their doctor.



What supports may be provided under the VRS program?

Supports provided include:

- vocational counselling;
- assessment;
- career planning;
- adaptive technical aids;
- specific training and education related to employment;
- loans and grants for educational–related expenses;
- prosthetic and orthotic devices, and adaptive equipment;
- workplace or vehicle modifications;
- prescriptive goods and services such as wheelchairs or attendant care;
- pre–vocational work adjustment and on–the–job training;
- job placement.

Public Service Training Program

The Public Service Training Program (PSTP) provides people with disabilities with access to work experience, training, and employment opportunities within the provincial government. PSTP provides on–the–job training for approximately six months for persons who have a disability and who are experiencing disability–related barriers to employment. The program is available throughout the province.

Services are delivered by Employment Services Centre staff who help match eligible individuals with training positions in host ministries.

PSTP is part of the Vocational Rehabilitation Service program.

Q&A

Who is eligible for the program?

Anyone who has a disability and is capable of working may be eligible for the PSTP.

How does the program work?

To apply, the applicant makes an appointment with a VRS consultant at the nearest Employment Services Centre. If accepted, the individual, along with a VRS representative, will approach appropriate ministries to match his or her training needs with opportunities within a ministry. Once a suitable placement is identified, a training plan is developed and an interview with the participant is conducted by the department's designated supervisor.

Who pays the participant's wages and other costs?

Wages and benefits are initially paid by the host ministry, but 50 per cent is reimbursed by MHR.

How does a PSTP position fit with existing union positions?

The PSTP is established under the Collective Agreement between the Government of British Columbia and the BCGEU. The agreement states that assignments in no way conflict with existing union agreements. Participants are eligible for jobs not normally carried out by bargaining unit members, and for duties that are not the principal duties of any job in the bargaining unit.

Labour Market Development Agreement

It is estimated that up to two–thirds of the BC Benefits caseload consists of people willing and able to work. Many are former Employment Insurance clients whose claims have expired.

Under the Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA), the governments of British Columbia and Canada collaborate to streamline efforts to help unemployed British Columbians move into the labour market.

A Secretariat, made up of staff of Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) and MHR supports the implementation of the Labour Market Development Agreement. Secretariat activities include establishing priorities, managing and reporting on activities and providing a link to field managers.

During the first five years of the agreement (1997–2002), $1.25 billion is being allocated from the federal Employment Insurance (EI) account to identify and assist thousands of Employment Insurance and eligible BC Benefits clients with job training and job placement.

An eligible BC Benefits client is an unemployed person who:

- is an active EI claimant; or
- had an EI claim opened or closed within the previous 36 months; or,
- had an EI benefit period within the previous 60 months, and
- was paid parental or maternity benefits through the EI or the former *Unemployment Insurance (UI) Act;* or,
- withdrew from the labour market to care for a newborn child, or a child placed for the purposes of adoption; and,
- is currently seeking to re–enter the labour market.

For more information on the LMDA, contact the LMDA coordinator in the nearest regional office. See MHR Directory starting on p. 85.

Office For Disability Issues (ODI)

The mission of the Office for Disability Issues is to champion equality by creating a comprehensive, coordinated provincial system, where disability is not a barrier to full participation. The Director and staff of the ODI ensure that the interests of the disability community are voiced when provincial government policies, programs or legislation are being prepared that will have an impact on persons with disabilities and their families.

The Director of the Office for Disability Issues is a member of the Assistant Deputy Ministers' Committee on Disability Issues, a senior level interministry panel with a mandate to work out cross–ministry disability issues and establish priorities.

Some examples of ODI activities include:

- participating in the development of the Disability Lens, a tool to help government staff assess and address the impact of all policies, programs and decisions on persons with disabilities;
- hosting Outreach Forums in communities around the province to share information with persons with disabilities and those working in the field, and to receive input on future project priorities for ODI;
- ensuring that persons with disabilities are represented during consultations on proposed legislative or program changes, and that public consultations have physical and sensory access for persons with disabilities (e.g. through interpretive services and alternative formats);
- heightening awareness of disability issues in the public service by providing educational opportunities through Employee Learning Services;
- maintaining an up–to–date Web site that is a model for accessibility at **www.gov.bc.ca/odi**;
- leading labour market attachment activities for persons with disabilities through policy development and numerous project activities.

The Office for Disability Issues ensures that the interests of the disability community are voiced when provincial government policies, programs or legislation are being prepared.

For more information contact:

Office for Disability Issues
PO Box 9567 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9K1

Telephone: 250 387–3813
Fax: 250 387–3114
TDD/TTY: 250 387–3555

Web site: **www.gov.bc.ca/odi**

Emergency Social Services

Q&A

Emergency Social Services (ESS) provides short–term assistance to British Columbians who are forced to leave their homes because of fire, floods, earthquakes or other emergencies. This assistance includes shelter, food, clothing, emotional support and reuniting families.

How does ESS work?

At the heart of ESS disaster response are over 5,000 volunteers across the province, who, as members of local ESS teams, plan and deliver essential services to those who need help. ESS teams are lead by team directors who are appointed by local governments. Buildings are designated to serve as emergency reception centres and when an emergency strikes, the centre is opened and staffed by volunteers who provide for the immediate needs of evacuees.

What kind of training and support is provided to ESS volunteers?

The ESS Branch of the Ministry of Human Resources:

- provides leadership and support to community volunteers, which includes the development of broad policy framework, procedures and guidelines;
- sponsors training for volunteers through the Emergency Management Division of the Justice Institute, Canadian Red Cross, Salvation Army and Christian Reformed World Relief Committee;
- provides funding to the Emergency Social Services Association which represents ESS volunteers throughout the province, publishes a quarterly newsletter and organizes seminars of interest to volunteers in all regions of the province;
- distributes materials which enhance volunteers' effectiveness, including name badges, business cards, forms and supplies;
- operates a toll–free information line for volunteers; and,

- sponsors key volunteers' attendance at relevant conferences and workshops.

Who pays for emergency services to evacuees?

Costs of services provided to people affected by disasters are covered by the Ministry of Attorney General's provincial Disaster Financial Assistance program.

Who are the ESS branch partners?

The ministry has formed partnerships with non–government organizations and other ministries to provide additional resources to communities which may be overwhelmed by a major disaster. Emergency Social Services partners that can assist communities include:

- Adventist Disaster Response Association
- BC Housing Commission
- Canadian Red Cross Society
- Christian Reform World Relief Committee
- Emergency Social Services Association of B.C.
- Justice Institute
- Mennonite Disaster Services
- Salvation Army
- St. John Ambulance
- Telephone Pioneers Amateur Radio Club

Did You Know . . .

There are over 5,500 trained ESS volunteers working in 140 communities through-out the province.

For more information about the ESS program call:

- The local municipal office and ask for the name and contact number of the ESS director or emergency program coordinator in the community, OR
- ESS Program Office at 1 800 585–9559

Web site: **www.ess.bc.ca**

MHR Directory

Region 1—Vancouver

101—Regional Office
650, 1185 West Georgia
Vancouver BC V6E 4E6
Telephone: 604 660-3224
Facsimile: 604 660-2503

112—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Fairview
201, 828 West 8th Avenue
Vancouver BC V5Z 1E2
Telephone: 604 660-1700
Facsimile: 604 775-2895

113—Employment and Benefits Centre-
Mt Pleasant West
202, 828 West 8th Avenue
Vancouver BC V5Z 1E2
Telephone: 604 660-6099
Facsimile: 604 775-1503

115-–Employment and
Benefits Centre–Yaletown
1002 Seymour Street
Vancouver BC V6B 3M6
Telephone: 604 660-3035
Facsimile: 604 660-0770

116—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Anchor Point
201, 1023 Davie Street
Vancouver BC V6E 1M5
Telephone: 604 660-3800
Facsimile: 604 775-1508

118—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Parkside
2nd Floor, 1725 Robson Street
Vancouver BC V6G 1C9
Telephone: 604 660-3300
Facsimile: 604 660-0409

121—Employment and
Benefits Centre–China Creek
201, 475 East Broadway
Vancouver BC V5T 1W9
Telephone: 604 660-6500
Facsimile: 604 775-2896

122—Employment and Benefits Centre-
MT Pleasant East
465 East Broadway
Vancouver BC V5T 1W9
Telephone: 604 660-6311
Facsimile: 604 660-5298

123—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Kensington
2280 Kingsway
Vancouver BC V5N 5M9
Telephone: 604 660-5300
Facsimile: 604 660-0642

124—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Killarney
3070 Kingsway
Vancouver BC V5R 5J7
Telephone: 604 660-5644
Facsimile: 604 775-1506

125—Employment and
Benefits Centre–South Slope
2752 East 41st Avenue
Vancouver BC V5R 2X1
Telephone: 604 660-5910
Facsimile: 604 775-1521

126—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Sunset
301, 5550 Fraser Street
Vancouver BC V5W 2Z4
Telephone: 604 660-6018
Facsimile: 604 660-6925

127—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Fraserview
302, 5550 Fraser Street
Vancouver BC V5W 2Z4
Telephone: 604 775-3000
Facsimile: 604 775-2992

133—Child Care Services Office
2280 Kingsway
Vancouver BC V5N 5M9
Telephone: 604 660-5300
Facsimile: 604 660-0642

151—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Dockside
180 Main Street
Vancouver BC V6A 3V5
Telephone: 604 660-2941
Facsimile: 604 660-2383

152—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Waterfront
205 Powell Street
Vancouver BC V6A 1G3
Telephone: 604 660-2374
Facsimile: 604 689-4364

153—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Strathcona
522 Alexander Street
Vancouver BC V6A 1C7
Telephone: 604 660-9377
Facsimile: 604 660-9170

154—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Kiwassa
1st Floor, 666 East Hastings Street
Vancouver BC V6A 1R1
Telephone: 604 775-0478
Facsimile: 604 775-0496

155—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Hastings
1st Floor, 3550 East Hastings Street
Vancouver BC V5K 2A7
Telephone: 604 660-7277
Facsimile: 604 660-0880

156—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Sunrise
2nd Floor, 3552 East Hastings Street
Vancouver BC V5K 2A7
Telephone: 604 660-7262
Facsimile: 604 775-1491

157—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Grandview
2350 Commercial Drive
Vancouver BC V5N 4B7
Telephone: 604 660-9066
Facsimile: 604 775-1509

158—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Maquinna
2484 Renfrew Street
Vancouver BC V5M 3K2
Telephone: 604 660-9048
Facsimile: 604 660-9044

Howe Employment Services Centre
1440 – 625 Howe Street
Vancouver BC V6C 2T6
Telephone: 604 660-1889
Facsimile: 604 660-1783
TDD: 604 689-7682

Commercial Employment Services Centre
201 – 2555 Commercial Drive
Vancouver BC V5N 4C1
Telephone: 604 660-3419
Facsimile: 604 660-3450

Via Rail Employment Services Centre
220 – 1150 Station Street
Vancouver BC V6A 4C7
Telephone: 604 775-2777
Facsimile: 604 775-2774

Broadway Employment Services Centre
400 – 1001 West Broadway
Vancouver BC V6H 4B1
Telephone: 604 775-1252
Facsimile: 604 660-6296
TDD: 604 660-6275

Kingsway Employment Services Centre
208 – 2806 Kingsway Avenue
Vancouver BC V5R 5T5
Telephone: 604 775-3102
Facsimile: 604 775-3110

OE1—Prevention, Compliance
& Enforcement Office
4th Floor, 411 Dunsmuir Street
Vancouver BC V6B 1X4
Telephone: 604 660-8737
Facsimile: 604 660-9189

OP1—Vancouver Region Personnel Office
650, 1185 West Georgia
Vancouver BC V6E 4E6
Telephone: 604 660-2215
Facsimile: 604 660-2503

Region 2—Lower Mainland/Coast

201 – Regional Office
5th Floor, 210 West Broadway
Vancouver BC V5Y 3W2
Telephone: 604 660-0202
Facsimile: 604 660-5049

211—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Burnaby North
4647 East Hastings Street
Burnaby BC V5C 2K6
Telephone: 604 660-7070
Facsimile: 604 660-7073

212—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Burnaby South
220, 5021 Kingsway
Burnaby BC V5H 4A5
Telephone: 604 660-9500
Facsimile: 604 775-3144

213—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Burnaby West
348, 5021 Kingsway
Burnaby BC V5H 4A5
Telephone: 604 660-5555
Facsimile: 604 660-5571

215—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Burnaby Mountain
203, 3975 North Road
Burnaby BC V3J 1S2
Telephone: 604 664-0135
Facsimile: 604 664-0151

217—Employment and
Benefits Centre/Family Maintenance
100, 5760 Minoru Boulevard
Richmond BC V6X 2A9
Telephone: 604 660-9284
Facsimile: 604 660-2758

230—Employment and
Benefits Centre –Lonsdale South
1050 Churchill Crescent
North Vancouver BC V7P 3M7
Telephone: 604 981-0125
Facsimile: 604 987-5481

231—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Seymour/Lower Lonsdale
110, 255 West 1st Street
North Vancouver BC V7M 3G8
Telephone: 604 981-0100
Facsimile: 604 987-5924

232—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Capilano
1050 Churchill Crescent
North Vancouver BC V7P 3M7
Telephone: 604 981-0125
Facsimile: 604 987-5481

233—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Squamish
1100 Hunter Place
Box 1550
Squamish BC V0N 3G0
Telephone: 604 892-1451
Facsimile: 604 892-9631

234—Employment and
Benefits Centre-Sechelt
5498 Wharf Street
Box 890
Sechelt BC V0N 3A0
Telephone: 604 740-8950
Facsimile: 604 885-6491

237—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Richmond
100, 5760 Minoru Boulevard
Richmond BC V6X 2A9
Telephone: 604 660-9284
Facsimile: 604 660-2758

Lower Mainland Regional Employment
Services Centre
Room 200, 4946 Canada Way
Burnaby BC V5G 4J6
Telephone: 604 660-7227
Facsimile: 604 775-3139

Metrotown Employment Services Centre
1103 – 4720 Kingsway Avenue,
Metrotower II
Burnaby BC V5H 4N2
Telephone: 604 660-7100
Facsimile: 604 775-0768
TDD: 604 660-5242

North Vancouver Employment
Services Centre
200 – 126 East 15th Street
North Vancouver BC V7L 2P9
Telephone: 604 775-2751
Facsimile: 604 775-2755

Sechelt Employment Services Centre
202 – 5710 Toredo Street
Box 950
Sechelt BC V0N 3A0
Telephone: 604 740-0029
Facsimile: 604 740-0041

Squamish Employment Services Centre
1360 Pemberton Street
Box 1008
Squamish BC V0N 3G0
Telephone: 604 892-3933
Facsimile: 604 892-9483

Richmond Employment Services Centre
350 – 5951 Number 3 Road
Richmond BC V6X 2E3
Telephone: 604 660-4372
Facsimile: 604 775-2795

OE2—Prevention, Compliance
& Enforcement Office
900, 1200 West 73rd Avenue
Vancouver BC V6P 6G5
Telephone: 604 664-0100
Facsimile: 604 664-0117

OP2—Lower Mainland/Coast
Region Personnel Office
5th Floor, 210 West Broadway
Vancouver BC V5Y 3W2
Telephone: 604 660-0212
Facsimile: 604775-1149

Region 3—Fraser North/ Upper Valley

301—Regional Office
201, 906 Roderick Avenue
Coquitlam BC V3K 1R1
Telephone: 604 527-1216
Facsimile: 604 527-1255

351—Employment and Benefits
Centre/Family Maintenance/
Child Care Services
530, 2755 Lougheed Highway
Port Coquitlam BC V3B 5Y9
Telephone: 604 927-2055
(Family Maintenance)
Telephone: 604 927-2065 (Child Care)
Facsimile: 604 464-4596

352—Employment and
Benefits Centre–West
202, 1015 Columbia Street
New Westminster BC V3M 6H6
Telephone: 604 660-8100
Facsimile: 604 775-3140

353—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Downtown
100, 237 East Columbia Street
New Westminster BC V3L 3W4
Telephone: 604 660-8160
Facsimile: 604 775-3141

355—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Burnaby/Coquitlam
100, 504 Cottonwood Avenue
Coquitlam BC V3J 2R5
Telephone: 604 937-2300
Facsimile: 604 937-2365

356—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Coquitlam/Port Moody
2610 St. John's Street
Port Moody BC V3H 2B6
Telephone: 604 937-8901
Facsimile: 604 939-5354

357—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Port Coquitlam
2062 Manning Avenue
Port Coquitlam BC V3B 1L6
Telephone: 604 941-6625
Facsimile: 604 941-8229

358—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Maple Ridge West
12240 Harris Road
Pitt Meadows BC V3Y 2E9
Telephone: 604 460-0214
Facsimile: 604 460-0253

359—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Maple Ridge East
102, 22522 Lougheed Highway
Maple Ridge BC V2X 2V1
Telephone: 604 466-4441
Facsimile: 604 463-8946

361—Employment and
Benefits Centre–West
101, 2865 Cruickshank Street
Abbotsford BC V2T 5E7
Telephone: 604 852-5230
Facsimile: 604 855-4360

362—Employment and
Benefits Centre–East
102, 2684 Trinity Avenue
Abbotsford BC V2S 3S4
Telephone: 604 852-5377
Facsimile: 604 852-5387

363—Employment and
Benefits Centre–North
101, 8978 School Street
Chilliwack BC V2P 4L4
Telephone: 604 702-2363
Facsimile: 604 702-2320

364—Employment and
Benefits Centre–South
101, 7388 Vedder Road
Box 2160 Sardis Stn Main
Sardis BC V2R 1A6
Telephone: 604 824-4751
Facsimile: 604 858-9536

365—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Hope
999 Water Street
Box 1537
Hope BC V0X 1L0
Telephone: 604 869-4929
Facsimile: 604 869-5574

366—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Mission
33276 Second Avenue
Mission BC V2V 1K1
Telephone: 604 814-1000
Facsimile: 604 826-9441

367—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Agassiz
7278 Pioneer Avenue
Box 440
Agassiz BC V0M 1A0
Telephone: 604 796-9879
Facsimile: 604 796-9583

368—Employment and
Benefits Centre/Family Maintenance
101, 2684 Trinity Street
Abbotsford BC V2S 3S4
Telephone: 604 852-5200
Facsimile: 604 852-5387

Abbotsford Employment Services Centre
Suite 200, 32463 Simon Avenue
Abbotsford BC V2T 5E3
Telephone: 604 852-5922
Facsimile: 604 864-6707
TDD: 604 852-7347

Chilliwack Employment Services Centre
45860 Cheam Avenue
Chilliwack BC V2P 1N6
Telephone: 604 795-8636
Facsimile: 604 795-8220

Coquitlam Employment Services Centre
305 – 2963 Glen Drive
Coquitlam BC V3B 2P7
Telephone: 604 927-2911
Facsimile: 604 927-2913
TDD: 604 945-0371

OE3—Prevention, Compliance
& Enforcement Office
200, 906 Roderick Avenue
Coquitlam BC V3K 1R1
Telephone: 604 527-1200
Facsimile: 604 527-1209

OE3—Learning Centre
#102, 2865 Cruickshank Avenue
Abbotsford, BC V2T 5E7
Telephone: 604 864-6735 and 864-6736
Facsimile: 604 864-6739

OE3—Abbotsford Sub-Office
103, 32544 Dahlstrom Avenue
Abbotsford BC V2T 4Y1
Telephone: 604 852-5223
Facsimile: 604 852-5224

OP3—Fraser North/Upper Valley Region
Personnel Office
201, 906 Roderick Avenue
Coquitlam BC V3K 1R1
Telephone: 604 527-1290
Facsimile: 604 527-1255

Hope Employment Services Centre
999 Water Street
PO Box 1537
Hope BC V0X 1L0
Telephone: 604 869-7241
Facsimile: 604 869-5574

Maple Ridge Employment Services Centre
Unit 2, 22320 Selkirk Avenue
Maple Ridge BC V2X 2X5
Telephone: 604 463-9758
Facsimile: 604 463-8796

New Westminster Employment
Services Centre
312, 625 Agnes Street
New Westminster BC V3M 5Y4
Telephone: 604 660-2350
Facsimile: 604 660-2413

Region 4—Fraser South

401—Regional Office
101, 5783 176A Street
Cloverdale BC V3S 6S6
Telephone: 604 575-0100
Facsimile: 604 576-0759

441—Employment and
Benefits Centre–River Heights
103, 13777 103rd Avenue
Surrey BC V3T 5B5
Telephone: 604 586-2701
Facsimile: 604 586-2601

442—Employment and Benefits
Centre–Delta North (In–take Only)
105, 7953 Scott Road
Delta BC V4C 6P6
Telephone: 604 501-3257
Facsimile: 604 572-3794

443—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Scottsview
9360 120th Street
Surrey BC V3V 4B9
Telephone: 604 586-2755
Facsimile: 604 586-2770

444—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Whalley's Corner
101, 10095 136A Street
Surrey BC V3T 4G1
Telephone: 604 581-2828
Facsimile: 604 581-4052

448—Child Care Services/
Family Maintenance Office
10040 King George Highway
Surrey BC V3T 2W4
Telephone: 604 586-4000
Facsimile: 604 951-4973

451—Employment and
Benefits Centre–White Rock
101, 1456 Johnston Road
White Rock BC V4B 3Z5
Telephone: 604 531-5505
Facsimile: 604 531-6741

452—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Fleetwood
101, 16088 84th Avenue
Surrey BC V3S 2P1
Telephone: 604 501-8250
Facsimile: 604 572-9034

453—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Langley
101, 5753 Glover Road
Langley BC V3A 8HA
Telephone: 604 532-3666
Facsimile: 604 532-4944

455—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Guildford
14672 108A Avenue
Surrey BC V3R 1W8
Telephone: 604 586-2830
Facsimile: 604 586-2855

456—Employment and Benefits
Centre/Child Care Services/
Family Maintenance
17672 58A Avenue
Surrey BC V3S 8V7
Telephone: 604 575-7551
Facsimile: 604 576-3174

457—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Park Place
130, 13749 72nd Avenue
Surrey BC V3W 2P2
Telephone: 604 501-8159
Facsimile: 604 501-3236

Fraser Valley Regional
Employment Services Centre
102, 5783 – 176A Street
Surrey BC V3S 6S6
Telephone: 604 576-3778
Facsimile: 604 576-3786

Langley Employment Services Centre
Suite 104, 20316 – 56th Avenue
Langley BC V3A 3Y7
Telephone: 604 532-3627
Facsimile: 604 532-3547

Surrey Employment Services Centre
102 – 9030 King George Hwy
Surrey BC V3V 7Y3
Telephone: 604 543-6600
Facsimile: 604 501-3185
TDD: 604 591-5729

OE4—Prevention, Compliance
& Enforcement Office
104, 13777 103 Avenue
Surrey BC V3T 5K5
Telephone: 604 586-2606
Facsimile: 604 586-2608

OP4—Fraser South Region
Personnel Office
101A, 5783 176A Street
Cloverdale BC V3S 6S6
Telephone: 604 576-0754
Facsimile: 604 576-0759

Region 5—Okanagan/ Kootenays

501—Regional Office
102, 1345 St Paul Street
Kelowna BC V1Y 2E2
Telephone: 250 712-7500
Facsimile: 250 712-7522

521—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Kelowna East
165 Highway 33 East
Kelowna BC V1X 2A1
Telephone: 250 491-7900
Facsimile: 250 861-7635

523—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Kelowna/Westbank
3685 Hoskins Road
Westbank BC V4T 1P6
Telephone: 250 768-6100
Facsimile: 250 768-3083

524—Employment and Benefits Centre–Kelowna North/Winfield
180, 1516 Keehn Road
Kelowna BC V1X 5T3
Telephone: 250 861-7630
Facsimile: 250 861-7690

525—Employment and Benefits Centre–Kelowna South
473 West Avenue
Kelowna BC V1Y 4Z3
Telephone: 250 861-7664
Facsimile: 250 861-7683

534—Employment and Benefits Centre–Penticton
315, 1301 Main Street
Penticton BC V2A 5E9
Telephone: 250 492-9700
Facsimile: 250 492-1410

535—Employment and Benefits Centre–Penticton/Summerland
301, 1301 Main Street
Penticton BC V2A 5E9
Telephone: 250 492-9722
Facsimile: 250 492-1379

535s—Summerland Sub–Office
(Tues & Thurs)
13216 Henry Avenue
Summerland BC V0H 1Z0
Telephone: 250 492-1380
Facsimile: 250 492-1379

537—Employment and Benefits Centre–Oliver
34630 95th Street
Bag 5000
Oliver BC V0H 1T0
Telephone: 250 485-6016
Facsimile: 250 498-6093

538—Employment and Benefits Centre–Princeton
89 Kenley Avenue
Box 28
Princeton BC V0X 1W0
Telephone: 250 295-6901
Facsimile: 250 295-3804

541—Employment and Benefits Centre–Grand Forks
174 Market Avenue
Box 460
Grand Forks BC V0H 1H0
Telephone: 250 442-5474
Facsimile: 250 442-4324

543—Employment and Benefits Centre–Trail
1520 Bay Avenue
Trail BC V1R 4B3
Telephone: 250 364-0550
Facsimile: 250 364-0942

544—Employment and Benefits Centre–Nelson/Kaslo
1st Floor, 566 Stanley Avenue
Nelson BC V1L 1N2
Telephone: 250 354-6488
Facsimile: 250 354-6286

546—Employment and Benefits Centre–Nakusp
204 West 6th Avenue
Box 959
Nakusp BC V0G 1R0
Telephone: 250 265-3723
Facsimile: 250 265-3117

547—Employment and Benefits Centre–Castlegar
620 – 17th Street
Castlegar BC V1N 4G7
Telephone: 250 365-8544
Facsimile: 250 365-8578

551—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Creston
224, 10th Avenue North
Box 1180
Creston BC V0B 1G0
Telephone: 250 428-3230
Facsimile: 250 428-3297

553—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Cranbrook
106, 1212 2nd Street North
Cranbrook BC V1C 4T6
Telephone: 250 426-1331
Facsimile: 250 426-1640

554—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Invermere
642 7th Avenue
Box 730
Invermere BC V0A 1K0
Telephone: 250 342-4288
Facsimile: 250 342-4286

555—Employment and
Benefits Centre-Fernie
341 2nd Avenue
Bag 1000
Fernie BC V0B 1M0
Telephone: 250 423-5300
Toll Free: 1 888 900-9970
Facsimile: 250 423-4364

556—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Kimberley
97 Wallinger Avenue
Kimberley BC V1A 1Y6
Telephone: 250 427-4831
Facsimile: 250 427-5638

557—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Sparwood
96 Greenwood Mall
Box 1086
Sparwood BC V0B 2G0
Telephone: 250 425-0213
Facsimile: 250 425-7851

559—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Golden
1104 9th Street South
Box 930
Golden BC V0A 1H0
Telephone: 250 344-7577
Facsimile: 250 344-7592

Interior Regional
Employment Services Centre
302 – 1726 Dolphin Avenue
Kelowna BC V1Y 9R9
Telephone: 250 717-2056
Facsimile: 250 717-2057

Cranbrook Employment Services Centre
203 – 100 Cranbrook Street North
Cranbrook BC V1C 3P9
Telephone: 250 426-1281
Facsimile: 250 426-1292
TDD: 250 426-1550

Golden Employment Services Centre
221 – 903 9th Street
Box 1200
Golden BC V0A 1H0
Telephone: 250 344-7758
Facsimile: 250 344-7759

Grand Forks Employment Services Centre
131 Central Avenue
Box 2859
Grand Forks BC V0H 1H0
Telephone: 250 442-5374
Facsimile: 250 442-8251

Kelowna Employment Services Centre
301 – 1726 Dolphin Avenue
Kelowna BC V1Y 9R9
Telephone: 250 717-2085
Facsimile: 250 717-2038

Nelson Employment Services Centre
333 Victoria Street
Nelson BC V1L 4K3
Telephone: 250 354-6865
Facsimile: 250 354-6869

Oliver Employment Services Centre
101, 9971 350th Avenue
Oliver BC V0H 1T0
Telephone: 250 498-3921

Penticton Employment Services Centre
301, 1301 Main Street
Penticton BC V2A 5E9
Telephone: 250 492-1448
Facsimile: 250 492-1420

Trail Employment Services Centre
1520 Bay Avenue
Trail BC V1R 4B3
Telephone: 250 364-0704
Facsimile: 250 364-0729

OE5—Prevention, Compliance
& Enforcement Office
303, 1664 Richter Street
Kelowna BC V1Y 8N3
Telephone: 250 712-7506
Facsimile: 250 712-7522

OE5—Nelson Sub-Office
2nd Floor, 310 Ward Street
Nelson BC V1L 5S4
Telephone: 250 354-6538
Facsimile: 250 354-6515

OE5—Penticton Sub-Office
105, 3547 Skaha Lake Road
Penticton BC V2A 7K2
Telephone: 250 770-7500
Facsimile: 250 492-1273

OP5—Okanagan/Kootenay
Region Personnel Office
102, 1345 St. Paul Street
Kelowna BC V1Y 2E2
Telephone: 250 712-7500
Facsimile: 250 712-7511

Region 6—Central BC

601—Regional Office
167 Lorne Street
Kamloops BC V2C 1V9
Telephone: 250 828-4600
Facsimile: 250 828-4614

621— Employment and Benefits
Centre–Kamloops Downtown
631 Seymour Street
Kamloops BC V2C 2H1
Telephone: 250 828-4474
Facsimile: 250 371-3756

623—Employment and
Benefits Centre/Family Maintenance–
Kamloops North
765 Tranquille Road
Kamloops BC V2B 3J3
Telephone: 250 554-8900
Facsimile: 250 376-8563

624—Employment and
Benefits Centre-Kamloops Sydney
726B Sydney Avenue
Kamloops BC V2B 1M9
Telephone: 250 554-8850
Facsimile: 250 371-3964

625—Employment and
Benefits Centre/Child Care Services
101, 478 St Paul Street
Kamloops BC V2C 2J6
Telephone: 250 828-4803
Facsimile: 250 828-4817

633—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Ashcroft
Box 1150, 611 Railway
Ashcroft BC V0K 1A0
Telephone: 250 453-9188
Facsimile: 250 453-9524

634—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Lillooet
514 Main Street
Bag 700
Lillooet BC V0K 1V0
Telephone: 250 256-4277
Facsimile: 250 256-0121

635—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Clearwater
49 West Old Yellowhead Highway
RR 2, Box 2556
Clearwater BC V0E 1N0
Telephone: 250 674-3128
Facsimile: 250 674-3725

636—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Merritt
2164 Quilchena Avenue
Bag 4400 Stn Main
Merritt BC V1K 1B8
Telephone: 250 378-9388
Facsimile: 250 315-1379

637—Employment and
Benefits Centre–100 Mile House
486 Birch Avenue South
Box 730
100 Mile House BC V0K 2E0
Telephone: 250 395-5622
Facsimile: 250 395-5626

642—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Salmon Arm
521 6th Street North East
Bag 100
Salmon Arm BC V1E 4S4
Telephone: 250 832-1726
Facsimile: 250 832-1727

643—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Revelstoke
210 Garden Avenue
PO Box 380
Revelstoke BC V0E 2S0
Telephone: 250 837-7672
Facsimile: 250 837-3519

653—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Vernon North
3007 35th Avenue
Vernon BC V1T 2S9
Telephone: 250 549-5474
Facsimile: 250 549-6853

654—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Vernon South
202, 2928 29th Street
Vernon BC V1T 5A6
Telephone: 250 549-5470
Facsimile: 250 549-5442

673—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Williams Lake
253 4th Avenue North
Williams Lake BC V2G 2E1
Telephone: 250 398-4221
Facsimile: 250 398-4586

675—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Bella Coola
Cliff Street
Box 217
Bella Coola BC V0T 1C0
Telephone: 250 799-0056
Facsimile: 250 799-5792
Toll free: 1 888 536-5488

677—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Quesnel
159 Kinchant Street
Quesnel BC V2J 2R1
Telephone: 250 992-4320
Facsimile: 250 992-4334

690—Employment and
Benefits Centre/Labour Market
101, 478 St Paul Street
Kamloops BC V2C 2J6
Telephone: 250 828-4802
Facsimile: 250 828-4817

Kamloops Employment Services Centre
441 Columbia Street
Kamloops BC V2C 2T3
Telephone: 250 371-3780
Facsimile: 250 371-3939
TDD: 250 371-3942

Merritt Employment Services Centre
2176 Quilchena Avenue
Box 4400, Station Main
Merritt BC V1K 1B8
Telephone: 250 378-9301
Facsimile: 250 378-9346

100 Mile House Employment
Services Centre
160 Cedar Avenue
Box 1600
100 Mile House BC V0K 2E0
Telephone: 250 395-5514
Facsimile: 250 395-5596

Salmon Arm Employment Services Centre
202 – 351 Hudson Road NE
Box 100, Station Main
Salmon Arm BC V1E 4S4
Telephone: 250 832-1626
Facsimile: 250 832-1737

Vernon Employment Services Centre
201, 2802 – 30th Street
Vernon BC V1T 8G7
Telephone: 250 558-2750
Facsimile: 250 558-2755

Quesnel Employment Services Centre
283 Reid Street
Quesnel BC V2J 2M1
Telephone: 250 992-4121
Facsimile: 250 992-4123

Williams Lake Employment Services Centre
112E Second Avenue N
Postal #40596
Williams Lake BC V2G 1Z6
Telephone: 250 398-4771
Facsimile: 250 398-4772

OE6—Prevention, Compliance
& Enforcement Office
800, 235 First Avenue
Kamloops BC V2C 3J4
Telephone: 250 371-3771
Facsimile: 250 371-3768

OE6—Vernon PCE Sub–Office
3201 30th Street
Vernon BC V1T 9G3
Telephone: 250 549-5538
Facsimile: 250 549-5602

OE6—Williams Lake PCE Sub-Office
253 4th Avenue North
Williams Lake BC V2G 2E1
Telephone: 250 398-4374
Facsimile: 250 398-4586

0P6—Central BC Personnel Office
167 Lorne Street
Kamloops BC V2V 1V9
Telephone: 250 828-4934
Facsimile: 250 828-4614

Region 7—Prince George/Northern BC

701 – Regional Office
605, 299 Victoria Street
Prince George BC V2L 5B8
Telephone: 250 565-6220
Facsimile: 250 565-6366

711—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Smithers
1st Floor, 3793 Alfred Avenue
Bag 5000
Smithers BC V0J 2N0
Telephone: 250 847-7305
Facsimile: 250 847-7749

712—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Houston
2238 Law Avenue
Bag 2000
Houston BC V0J 1Z0
Telephone: 250 845-2611
Facsimile: 250 845-7942

713—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Hazelton
4215 Government Street
PO Box 380
Hazelton BC V0J 1Y0
Telephone: 250 842-5201
Facsimile: 250 842-6723

715—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Burns Lake
33 3rd Avenue
Box 3500
Burns Lake BC V0J 1E0
Telephone: 250 692-3118
Facsimile: 250 692-3774

722—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Terrace
102, 2918 South Eby Street
Terrace BC V8G 2X5
Telephone: 250 638-2401
Facsimile: 250 638-2422

723—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Kitimat
795 South Lahakas Boulevard
Kitimat BC V8C 1G2
Telephone: 250 632-6134
Facsimile: 250 632-6287

724—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Dease Lake
Highway 37
Bag 2000
Dease Lake BC V0C 1L0
Telephone: 250 771-3444
Facsimile: 250 771-3449

732—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Prince Rupert
375, 309 West 2nd Avenue
Prince Rupert BC V8J 3T1
Telephone: 250 624-7505
Facsimile: 250 624-7487

733—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Queen Charlotte City
214 3rd Avenue
Box 279
Queen Charlotte City BC V0T 1S0
Telephone: 250 559-7703
Facsimile: 250 559-8690

733s—Masset Sub–Office
1666 Orr Street (Masset)
Box 279
Queen Charlotte City BC V0T 1S0
Telephone: 250 626-3626
Facsimile: 250 626-9356

742—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Dawson Creek
10103 13th Street
Dawson Creek BC V1G 4R3
Telephone: 250 784-2311
Facsimile: 250 784-2302

743—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Chetwynd
4744 52nd Street
Bag 105
Chetwynd BC V0C 1J0
Telephone: 250 788-9241
Facsimile: 250 788-9906

745—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Fort St. John
100, 10003 110th Avenue
Fort St. John BC V1J 6M7
Telephone: 250 787-3455
Facsimile: 250 787-3250

746—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Fort Nelson
5020 Airport Drive
Bag 1000
Fort Nelson BC V0C 1R0
Telephone: 250 774-6185
Facsimile: 250 774-3421

762—Employment and Benefits
Centre/Youth Works/Child Care Services
3235 Westwood Drive
Prince George BC V2N 1S4
Telephone: 250 614-6314
Facsimile: 250 614-0961

763—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Spruceland
510 Carney Street
Prince George BC V2M 2K6
Telephone: 250 565-6330
Facsimile: 250 565-4233

764—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Westwood
510 Carney Street
Prince George BC V2M 2K6
Telephone: 250 565-6330
Facsimile: 250 565-4233

765—Employment and Benefits
Centre/Welfare to Work Office
510 Carney Street
Prince George BC V2M 2K6
Telephone: 250 565-6330
Facsimile: 250 565-4215

766—Employment and Benefits Centre/
Family Maintenance/Disability Benefits
602, 299 Victoria Street
Prince George BC V2L 5B8
Telephone: 250 565-6211
Facsimile: 250 564-8864

772—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Fort St James
250 Stuart Drive East
Bag 1300
Fort St James V0J 1P0
Telephone: 250 996-2181
Facsimile: 250 996-7957

774—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Vanderhoof
160 East Columbia Street
Vanderhoof BC V0J 3A0
Telephone: 250 567-6334
Facsimile: 250 567-6459

777—Employment and
Benefits Centre–McBride
852 2nd Street
Box 549
McBride BC V0J 2E0
Telephone: 250 569-3760
Facsimile: 250 569-3412

777s—Valemount Sub–Office
(Tues & Thurs)
1207 5th Avenue
Valemount BC V0E 2Z0
Telephone: 250 566-9121
Facsimile: 250 569-3412

778—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Mackenzie
540 Mackenzie Boulevard
Bag 5000
Mackenzie BC V0J 2C0
Telephone: 250 997-7105
Facsimile: 250 997-7108

790—Employment and
Benefits Centre/Labour Market
602, 299 Victoria Street
Prince George BC V2L 5B8
Telephone: 250 565-7251
Facsimile: 250 565-6961

Dawson Creek Employment
Services Centre
102, 1508 – 102nd Avenue
Dawson Creek BC V1G 2E2
Telephone: 250 784-1300
Facsimile: 250 784-2424
Toll Free:1 888 239-1152

Fort St John Employment Services Centre
Room 475, 10003 – 110th Avenue
Fort St John BC V1J 6M7
Telephone: 250 787-3339
Facsimile: 250 787-3338

Prince George Employment
Services Centre
102, 1577 – 7th Avenue
Prince George BC V2L 3P5
Telephone: 250 565-6020
Facsimile: 250 565-6698
Toll Free:1 800 659-6655
TDD: 250 565-6918

Terrace Employment Services Centre
3250 Eby Street
Terrace BC V8G 5H4
Telephone: 250 638-6582
Facsimile: 250 638-6587

Kitimat Employment Services Centre
334 City Center
Kitimat BC V8C 1T6
Telephone: 250 632-4968
Facsimile: 250 639-9422

Prince Rupert Employment Services Centre
Ocean Centre Mall
420A, 309 – 2nd Avenue W
Prince Rupert BC V8J 3T1
Telephone: 250 624-7700
Facsimile: 250 624-7704

Smithers Employment Services Centre
1020 Murray Street
Bag 5000
Smithers BC V0J 2N0
Telephone: 250 847-7836
Facsimile: 250 847-7318

OE7—Prevention, Compliance
& Enforcement Office
606, 299 Victoria Street
Prince George BC V2L 5B8
Telephone: 250 565-7278
Facsimile: 250 565-7069

OE7—Terrace Sub–Office
120, 3408 Kalum Street
Terrace BC V8G 2N6
Telephone: 250 638-2194
Facsimile: 250 638-2211

OE7—Prince Rupert Sub–Office
375, 209 2nd Avenue West
Prince Rupert BC V8J 1G4
Telephone: 250 624-7505
Facsimile: 250 624-7487

OE7—Dawson Creek SubOffice
205, 1508 102nd Avenue
Dawson Creek BC V1G 2E2
Telephone: 250 784-2342
Facsimile: 250 784-2303

OP7—North Region Personnel Office
605, 299 Victoria Street
Prince George BC V2L 5B8
Telephone: 250 565-7046
Facsimile: 250 565-6366

Employment Services Centre
112E Second Avenue North
Williams Lake BC V2G 1Z6
Telephone: 250 398-4771
Facsimile: 250 398-4772

Region 8—Greater Vancouver Island

801—Regional Office
201, 6551 Aulds Road
Nanaimo BC V9T 6K2
Telephone: 250 390-5450
Facsimile: 250 390-5488

821—Employment and Benefits Centre/Child Care Services–North
3156 Barons Road
Nanaimo BC V9T 4B5
Telephone: 250 751-7800
Facsimile: 250 758-6439

822—Employment and Benefits Centre/Child Care Services–Centre
1, 1351 Estevan Road
Nanaimo BC V9S 3Y3
Telephone: 250 741-5535
Facsimile: 250 741-5545

823—Employment and Benefits Centre–South
60 Needham Road
Nanaimo BC V9R 1K4
Telephone: 250 741-5850
Facsimile: 250 741-5860

824—Employment and Benefits Centre/Family Maintenance
102, 2100 Labieux Road
Nanaimo BC V9T 5E9
Telephone: 250 751-7125
Facsimile: 250 751-7153

833—Employment and Benefits Centre–Port Alberni
4060 8th Avenue
Port Alberni BC V9Y 4S4
Telephone: 250 720-2600
Facsimile: 250 720-2618

835—Employment and Benefits Centre–Parksville
124 McCarter Street
Box 489
Parksville BC V9P 2G6
Telephone: 250 248-6134
Facsimile: 250 248-8274

851—Employment and Benefits Centre–Courtenay/Comox North
310 Puntledge Road
Courtenay BC V9N 3R1
Telephone: 250 334-1339
Facsimile: 250 334-1188

852—Employment and Benefits Centre–Courtenay South
615 10th Street
Courtenay BC V9N 1R2
Telephone: 250 703-2400
Facsimile: 250 703-2421

853—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Powell River
6944 Alberni Street
Powell River BC V8A 2C1
Telephone: 604 485-0633
Facsimile: 604 485-7962

854—Employment and Benefits
Centre–Campbell River North
833A 14th Avenue
Campbell River BC V9W 4H3
Telephone: 250 286-7666
Facsimile: 250 286-7712

855—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Port Hardy
8, 9250 Trustee Road
Bag 11000
Port Hardy BC V0N 2P0
Telephone: 250 949-7500
Facsimile: 250 949-8936

856—Employment and Benefits
Centre–Campbell River South
1, 470 Dogwood Street South
Campbell River BC V9W 6R4
Telephone: 250 286-7750
Facsimile: 250 286-7744

871—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Cowichan Valley
2, 205 Boundary Street
Duncan BC V9L 1Y3
Telephone: 250 746-2831
Facsimile: 250 746-2801

872—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Duncan
1, 205 Boundary Road
Duncam BC V9L 1Y3
Telephone: 250 746-2810
Facsimile: 250 746-2848

890—Employment and Benefits Centre/
Child Care Services/Labour Market
103 – 2100 Labieux Road
Nanaimo BC V9T 6E9
Telephone: 250 751-7180
Facsimile: 250 751-7136

Vancouver Island Regional Employment
Services Centre
305 – 155 Skinner Street
Nanaimo BC V9R 5E8
Telephone: 250 741-5848
Facsimile: 250 741-5849

Campbell River Employment
Services Centre
Suite C, 833 – 14th Avenue
Campbell River BC V9W 4H3
Telephone: 250 286-7751
Facsimile: 250 286-7755

Courtenay Employment Services Centre
3rd Floor, 910 Fitzgerald Street
Courtenay BC V9N 2R5
Telephone: 250 334-1444
Facsimile: 250 334-1449

Duncan/Cowichan Employment
Services Centre
201, 5462 Trans Canada Hwy
Duncan BC V9L 6W4
Telephone: 250 746-1448
Facsimile: 250 746-1467

Nanaimo Employment Services Centre
1st Floor, 155 Skinner Street
Nanaimo BC V9R 5E8
Telephone: 250 741-5809
Facsimile: 250 741-5818
TDD: 250 741-5816

Parksville Employment Services Centre
302 – 154 Memorial Avenue
PO Box 1892
Parksville BC V9P 2G4
Telephone: 250 248-6945
Facsimile: 250 248-9549

Port Alberni Employment Services Centre
201, 4877 Argyle Street
Port Alberni BC V9Y 1V9
Telephone: 250 720-4500
Facsimile: 250 720-4504

Port Hardy Employment Services Centre
9300 Trustee Road
Bag 11000
Port Hardy BC V0N 2P0
Telephone: 250 949-5124
Facsimile: 250 949-7508

Powell River Employment Services Centre
6944 Alberni Street
Powell River BC V8A 2C1
Telephone: 604 485-0636
Facsimile: 604 485-7962

OE8—Prevention, Compliance & Enforcement Office
101, 2100 Labieux Road
Nanaimo BC V9T 6E9
Telephone: 250 751-7270
Facsimile: 250 775-7299

OE8—Courtenay Sub–Office
206, 420 Cumberland Road
Courtenay, BC V9M 5M6
Telephone: 250 334-1435
Facsimile: 250 334-1303

OE8—Duncan Sub–Office
2, 205 Boundary Avenue
Duncan BC V9L 1Y3
Telephone: 250 746-2810
Facsimile: 250 746-2848

OP8—North Island Region
Personnel Office
201, 6551 Aulds Road
Nanaimo BC V9T 6K2
Telephone: 250 390-5452
Facsimile: 250 390-5466

Region 9—Garden City

901—Regional Office
1827 Fort Street
PO Box 9956 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9R4
Telephone: 250 952-5210
Facsimile: 250 952-4346

941—Employment and Benefits Centre/Single Parent Services
301 – 3960 Quadra Street
PO Box 9981 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9R5
Telephone: 250 952-4311
Facsimile: 250 952-5498

944—Employment and Benefits Centre–Langford
104, 940 Goldstream Avenue
PO Box 9976 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9R5
Telephone: 250 391-2810
Facsimile: 250 391-2233

945—Employment and Benefits Centre–Sooke
6868 West Coast Road
Sooke BC V0S 1N0
Telephone: 250 642-8640
Facsimile: 250 642-2841

946—Employment and Benefits
Centre/Welfare to Work–Downtown
1515 Quadra Street
PO Box 9974 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9R5
Telephone: 250 387-5356
Facsimile: 250 953-3175

951—Employment and Benefits Centre/
Disability Benefits Level II–Mount View
403, 771 Vernon Avenue
PO Box 9979 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9R5
Telephone: 250 952-4573
Facsimile: 250 952-4565

952/990—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Esquimalt
101, 1195 Esquimalt Road
PO Box 9973 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9R5
Telephone: 250 952-5840
Facsimile: 250 952-4084

953—Employment and Benefits Centre/
Early Detection and Prevention
1827 Fort Street
PO Box 9977 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9R5
Telephone: 250 952-5880
Facsimile: 250 952-4205

954—Employment and Benefits Centre/
Family Maintenance
302, 3960 Quadra Street
PO Box 9959 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9R4
Telephone: 250 952-5488
Facsimile: 250 952-4789

955—Employment and
Benefits Centre–Sidney
111, 2506 Beacon Avenue
PO Box 9978 Stn Prov Govt
Sidney BC V8W 9R5
Telephone: 250 655-5629
Facsimile: 250 655-5633

956—Employment and Benefits Centre/
Disability Benefits Level I–Swan Lake
403, 771 Vernon Avenue
PO Box 9980 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9R5
Telephone: 250 952-4573
Facsimile: 250 952-4565

957—Employment and
Benefits Centre/Youth Works
200, 910 View Street
PO Box 9960 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9R4
Telephone: 250 952-4657
Facsimile: 250 952-4581

958—Employment and
Benefits Centre/Welfare to Work
1626 Garnet Road
PO Box 9941 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9R5
Telephone: 250 952-5800
Facsimile: 250 352-5810

Victoria Employment Services Centre #1
933 Douglas Street
PO Box 9175, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9H8
Telephone: 250 387-3698
Facsimile: 250 356-0008
TDD: 250 356-0142

Victoria Employment Services Centre #2
6 – 40 Cadillac Avenue
PO Box 9177, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9H2
Telephone: 250 952-5177
Facsimile: 250 952-5042

Sooke/Langford Employment
Services Centre
202, 940 Goldstream Avenue
PO Box 9174, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9H8
Telephone: 250 478-0889
Facsimile: 250 478-5973

OE9—Prevention, Compliance
& Enforcement Office
304, 3960 Quadra Street
PO Box 9958 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9R4
Telephone: 250 952-4330
Facsimile: 250 952-4379

OP9—Garden City Personnel Office
301, 3960 Quadra Street
PO Box 9957 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9R4
Telephone: 250 952-4350
Facsimile: 250 952-4347

Community Child Care Contacts

Region 1 — Vancouver
650 1185 West Georgia Street
Vancouver, B.C. V6E 4E6
Telephone: 604 660-3224
Facsimile: 604 660-2503

Region 2 — Rainbow
5 th Floor 210 West Broadway
Vancouver B.C. V5Y 3W2
Telephone: 604 660-0202
Facsimile: 604 660-5049

Region 3 — Fraser North/Upper Valley
201 – 906 Roderick Avenue
Coquitlam B.C. V3K 1R1
Telephone: 604 527-1216
Facsimile: 604 527-1255

Region 4 — South Fraser
17672 58A Avenue
Surrey, B.C. V3S 8V7
Telephone: 604 575-7551
Facsimile: 604 576-3174

Region 5 — Kootenay Okanagan
302-1726 Dolphin Ave.
Kelowna, B.C. V1Y 9R9
Telephone: 250 470-0855
Facsimile: 250 470-0877

Region 6 — Central BC
167 Lorne Street
Kamloops, B.C. V2C 1V9
Telephone: 250 828-4125
Telephone: 250 828-4600 (for brochure)
Facsimile: 250 828-4614

Region7 — Prince George and the North
605-299 Victoria Avenue
Prince George B.C. V2L 5B8
Telephone: 250 565-6220
Facsimile: 250 565-6366

Region 8 — Greater Vancouver Island
103 2100 Labieux Road
Nanaimo, B.C. V9T 6E9
Telephone: 250 751-7180
Facsimile: 250 751-7136

Region 9 — Garden City
1827 Fort St.
PO Box 9956 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9R4
Telephone: 250 952-5210
Facsimile: 250 952-4346

For the latest directory listings, please go to the MHR Web site at:
http://www.mhr.gov.bc.ca/programs/isponum.htm

Can't find the number you're looking for?

Enquiry BC will refer callers to the appropriate MHR office
and will transfer calls free of charge. The toll free number is 1 800 663-7867.
In Victoria, call 387-6121 and in Vancouver, call 660-2421.

Individuals who are deaf may reach Enquiry BC
at the following Telephone Device for the Deaf (TTY) numbers:
Vancouver: 775-0303
Elsewhere: 1 800 661-8773

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All orders must be in writing. Do not phone to place an order.

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Questions regarding stock availability or ordering should be directed to:

Product Distribution Services, Customer Service
Mail: PO Box 9455 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9V7
Physical Address: 742 Vanalman Ave. Victoria B.C.

or e-mail your question, **not your order,** to :

Brian McNeil e-mail **Brian.McNeil@gems9.gov.bc.ca** ph. 250 952-4461 or
Les Johnson e-mail **Les.Johnson@gems1.gov.bc.ca** ph. 250 952-4563

Note: Most publications are available in print and electronic formats. Those available only in print are noted with an *.

General

Fast Track: Guide to the Ministry of Human Resources	Binder
MHR Annual Reports	Report
—96/97	
—97/98	
—98/99	
Publication Consent Form*	Form
Seniors Supplement	Brochure
The Works	Newsletter
Connections	Staff newsletter

BC Benefits

Action Against Poverty	Report
Assignment of Benefits	Brochure
The Appeal Process	Brochure and Poster
BC Benefits: The First Three Years	Report
BC Benefits and Your Income Tax Return	Poster
CPP Orphans Benefit	Poster, Card
Disability Benefits	Brochure
Disability Benefits II — Work, Training & Education Benefits	Brochure, Braille, Disk, Audio Tape, and Poster
Electronic Deposit	Poster and Brochure
Family Maintenance Program	Brochure
Family Maintenance Program: Assignment of Rights* —In English, Chinese, Vietnamese, Spanish, Punjabi, Czech, French, Russian, Farsi, Tagalog	Form
Health Services	Brochure
How to Apply for BC Benefits	Brochure
How to Complete the "Request for Continued Assistance Form"*	Brochure
Income Assistance	Brochure
Income Assistance and Disability Benefits Rates	Brochure
Other Benefits	Brochure
Questions & Answers on Your Rights to Privacy and the BC Benefits Process	Booklet
Transition to Work	Brochure
Your Rights & Responsibilities	Brochure
Youth Works Living Allowance Rates	Card

Child Care

Child Care Subsidy Information & Rates	Brochure
How to Claim the Child Care Subsidy	Booklet

Emergency Social Services

Coping with Disaster: *Emotional Health Issues for Disaster Workers on Assignment*	Brochure
Coping with Disaster: *Emotional Health Issues for Families and Friends of Disaster Workers*	Brochure
Coping with Disaster: *Emotional Health Issues for People Affected by Disasters*	Brochure
Coping with Disaster: *Returning Home from a Disaster Assignment*	Brochure
Emergency Social Services 1999/00 Survey	Report
—Executive Summary	
—Survey Findings	
Help When you Need it Most	Brochure
When Disaster Strikes: We are there to help	Brochure and Poster
Volunteers	Brochure

Labour Market Attachment

The Adult Back–To–School Book: Making a New Beginning*	Booklet
Contract Management*	Brochure
Early Intervention Program (EIP)*	Fact sheet
Industrial Adjustment Service: Adapting to Change–Investing in People*	Brochure
Industry Training Partnerships: Handbook and Tool Kit for Business and Labour*	Booklet
The Job Seeker's Handbook: Marketing Your Skills*	Booklet
Job Search	Package
—Job Search	
—Declaration of Job Search	
—Job Prospects	
—Envelope	
Job Start	Package
—Brochure	
—Employer application form	
—Employer claim form	
—Youth information form	
The Job–Loss Workbook: Creating a New Future*	Booklet

Provincial Employment and Training Programs: Helping Employers Find the Right Employee*	Brochure
Public Service Training Program	Brochure
Resource Guide for Successful Employment Transition	Binder
Vocational Rehabilitation Services: Removing Barriers to Education, Employment and Independence	Brochure
VRS Career Planning Guide*	Booklet
Welfare to Work*	Fact sheet
Workplace–Based Training (WBT)*	Fact sheet
The Works — Dec./99	Newsletter
Youth Work Here*	Decal and Poster
Youth Works (YW)*	Fact sheet

Office for Disability Issues

Accessible Labour Market Information (LMI) for People with Disabilities in B.C.: *Executive Summary**	Report
Office for Disability Issues: Report on 1998 Outreach Activities*	Report
The Strategy: for coordinating disability issues*	Newsletter

Glossary

This glossary lists and defines terms and acronyms commonly used in the Ministry of Human Resources.

ACT. Law passed by the Legislative Assembly.

ADM. Assistant Deputy Minister. Each ADM administers and is responsible for certain program areas.

ADULT. A person age 25 years or older.

APPEAL. BC Benefits clients use the appeal process for a review of a decision regarding their eligibility and assistance.

AR. Annual Review.

ASSISTANCE. Youth allowance and benefits (defined in the *Youth Works Act*); income assistance, hardship assistance and benefits (defined in the *Income Assistance Act*) or disability allowance and benefits (defined in the *Disability Benefits Program Act*).

AUTHORIZATION. For child care subsidy, a document issued to parent and caregiver, confirming eligibility for subsidy, amount of subsidy, and time period for eligibility.

BASIC EDUCATION. Refers to courses or programs in adult basic education, adult special education, English language training, literacy skills, and employment orientation.

BCMP. British Columbia Medical Plan (formerly the Medical Services Plan for British Columbia)

BELMONT BUILDING. The ministry headquarters, located at 614 Humboldt Street (near the Empress Hotel) in Victoria.

CHI. Community Housing Initiative

CHILD. For the purposes of BC Benefits, any unmarried individual under the age of 19.

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY. A monthly payment to help low-income families cover the fees of child care.

CHILD MINDING. Means the provision of supervised group care for children not more than three hours of care per day and not more than two days of care per week.

CIHR. Child in the Home of a Relative

DB. Disability Benefits

DIA/DIAND. Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada.

DIRECTOR. A divisional director responsible for a program or a support branch of the ministry.

DIRECT RELATIVE. A spouse (including common–law), parent, grandparent, brother, sister, daughter, son, granddaughter, or grandson. A person married (or common–law) to one of the above is considered a direct relative only if living in the same household as the spouse.

DISABILITY. A functional limitation or restriction of an individual's ability to perform an activity. (Not the same as a handicap: *see* "handicap.")

DISABILITY BENEFITS. A provincial financial entitlement for people with disabilities.

DM. Deputy Minister

DMO. Deputy Minister's Office

DS. District Supervisor

EI. Employment Insurance

EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMS. Programs under Youth Works and Income Assistance that help BC Benefits clients make the transition from welfare to work.

EMPLOYABLE. A status designated by the ministry when assessing eligibility for Income Assistance or Youth Works benefits. People with employable status are required to seek employment and participate in training or work experience programs.

EMPLOYMENT AND BENEFITS CENTRE. MHR district office. There are 138 Employment and Benefits Centres throughout the province.

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES CENTRE. Office through which job search, job preparation, work experience and training programs and services are delivered and/or coordinated.

ES. Emergency Services. Available in Vancouver and the Lower Mainland that provide night duty services. Takes all Helpline calls and refers them to Employment and Benefits Centres throughout the province.

ESS. Emergency Social Services

FAW. Financial Assistance Worker

FMEP. Family Maintenance Enforcement Program with the Ministry of Attorney General

FMP. Family Maintenance Program.

FMW. Family Maintenance Worker: Ministry staff who assist BC Benefits clients to obtain or vary orders for child or spousal support.

FOIPP. *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy*. The act and process by which personal information is collected and protected.

HANDICAP. An environmental or attitudinal barrier that limits the opportunity for a person to participate fully. Negative attitudes or inaccessible entrances to buildings are examples of handicaps. (Not the same as a disability: *see* "disability")

HAR. Homeless at risk

HARDSHIP. Assistance that may be granted to people not eligible for income support under BC Benefits. Usually repayable.

HSB. Health Services Branch

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT CANADA (HRDC). A federal agency that offers a range of programs designed to help youth and adults obtain and keep long–term employment. Includes various employment benefits and measures under the *Employment Insurance Act*, the Youth Initiative, Transitional Jobs Fund, and other programs.

IAS. Industrial Adjustment Services

ISP. Income Support Programs

ITA. Industry Training and Adjustment Program

JOB SHADOWING. An opportunity for a person to observe an employee performing a specified job at an eligible employer's work site.

LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION (LMI). Information that helps the labour market work, such as information that facilitates the matching of labour market supply and demand. LMI includes demographic, social, economic, and industrial information on current and future labour market demand, characteristics of the labour market supply, and conditions that may affect the interaction

LIUS. Lower–income urban single

LMDA. Labour Market Development Agreement

MAE. Ministry of Advanced Education

MHR. Ministry of Human Resources

MSP. Medical Services Plan (of British Columbia)

ODI. Office for Disability Issues

PCE. Prevention, Compliance and Enforcement, responsible for investigating and prosecuting fraud.

REO. Regional Executive Officer

SAFER. Sheltered Aid for Elderly Renters

SILP. Supported Independent Living Program

TRAINING CONSULTANT. A worker who helps Youth Works and Income Assistance clients access job and training programs.

VRS. Vocational Rehabilitation Services

WBT. Workplace–Based Training

WORK EXPERIENCE. An opportunity for a person to take a training position at an eligible employer's work site, performing some of the tasks of a specified job.

YOUNG PARENT PROGRAMS (YPP). These programs provide young parents with the opportunity to complete their high school education by providing licensed child care services and parenting skills education.

Youth. A person between the ages of 17 and 25.

YW. Youth Works